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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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EDITORIAL

ALTHOUGH we have not yet reached full employment, the specter of a serious price inflation grows in stature. While the House of Representatives busies itself with the problem of curbing defense strikes and the daily press foams at the mouth on the subject, a more menacing threat to our whole productive effort goes without effective challenge. The level of prices has already risen more than ten per cent since the the start of the defense program and the upward spiral has just begun. Unless Congress soon acts, and acts vigorously, to check it, we almost certainly face a much more rapid price rise in the year ahead; and one which will prove difficult to control. That will spell ruin for the laboring and the middle classes and, ultimately, even for the farmer. It will impair the defense effort in a year which promises to be one of the most crucial in our history. It will negate any attempts at a rational solution of the strike problem in defense industries and it will enormously enhance the possibility of a native fascist coup. For the economic climate in which fascism flourishes is one of privation for the workers and bankruptcy for the middle classes.

The source of the inflation menace is readily enough exposed. It inheres in the increasing discrepancy between the amount of available purchasing power and the available supply of consumers' goods for which that purchasing power may be offered. This gap will steadily widen as the defense program goes into high gear. While more and more people will work longer hours for higher total payrolls, fewer consumers' goods will be produced. Money incomes will rise, but the supply of goods for which those incomes can be spent will shrink. And when more purchasing power competes for less goods, rises in the price level will normally follow. The whole process is further accentuated at present by the operation of

the priorities system, under which defense shortages are transferred to consumers' goods industries.

There are, in theory, two answers to the problem thus presented. One is to increase the available supply of consumers' goods. This is the ideal solution, for it means a general rise in the standard of living. But in a situation of total defense it has only a limited application. In many areas today additional consumers' goods cannot be produced without interfering with the armaments program, and this situation is not altered by pointing out that many raw material bottlenecks might have been avoided by better planning and a more vigorous economic policy. It is the situation as it exists today with which we have to work. An effort to expand consumers' goods and services must be made, yet we must recognize that such effort by itself will prove inadequate.

Although the theory can be rather simply stated, the problem of controlling inflation is a complex one. Its solution involves no single magic formula, but an integrated multilateral attack. The ANTIOCH REVIEW urges the adoption of the following basic program at the earliest possible moment. If we delay action much longer, the situation may become acute:

1. Creation of an Office of Civilian Supply or Civilian Production along the lines first suggested by the Union for Democratic Action. There are still areas in which the production of consumers' goods can be expanded without impairing the defense effort and there is little doubt that our total production could be considerably increased by a better coordination of effort and the more efficient utilization of available personnel and materials. Such an Office could foster the development and use of substitute materials, look after the interests of the small business concerns which are being crushed in the course of the defense effort, and mobilize our five million unemployed for productive activities. These are tasks that cry out to be done, but which will not be done by the OPM.

2. Enactment of price control legislation with teeth in it. This should authorize the Price Control Administrator not only to apply strategic controls, but to fix a ceiling for all prices. The Administrator should be given the power to license industries in order to enforce his rulings.

3. Stabilization of wages and salaries through voluntary agreements arrived at by collective bargaining. The ANTIOCH REVIEW suggested a procedure to accomplish this in its Summer number.

4. Heavier income taxation in the higher brackets and enactment of a 100 per cent excess profits tax, as recommended by Secretary Morgenthau. The present excess profits tax is practically worthless as a check to inflation, and swollen profits constitute the chief inflationary threat at the present time. Corporate profits, which were 14 per cent higher in 1940 than in 1939 have already surpassed those of last year and promise to be the highest in history. In many defense industries they are approaching fabulous proportions. Thus a recent *Research Letter* of the Union for Democratic Action reports that for the first nine months of this year, the profits of thirty-one iron and steel corporations were 35 per cent higher than for the same period last year. Profits of United States Steel were up 38 per cent; those of Republic Steel, 43 per cent; American Rolling Mill, 110 per cent; Youngstown Sheet and Tube, 133 per cent. The story in the aircraft industry is a similar one.

5. An expansion of the social services, particularly in respect to health and recreation.

6. Institution of a system of direct control of credit and investment.

7. Adoption of some form of the Keynes plan for deferred savings. In view of the scope of the defense effort it will not be sufficient merely to reduce the consumption of the well-to-do. By one means or another we shall also have to reduce the consumption of the bulk of the population. At the present time that is being done through a whole series of consumers taxes, most of which bear most heavily upon those least able to pay. Our policy up to date has been essentially one of selling securities (government bonds) to the rich, while we taxed the poor. The result has been to accentuate the already grossly distorted picture of income distribution and to lay a base for further distortion in the future. We have thus far failed to recognize in practice that considerations both of efficiency and of social justice demand that this war be fought on the basis of equality of sacrifice. Taxes on articles of consumption, with the exception of those on deleterious or luxury goods, should be immediately repealed and replaced with a system of forced savings. The poor, like the rich, should receive assets in return for their eschewal of consumption now. This would have the further advantage of cushioning the expected postwar depression through providing a backlog of purchasing power.

On the foundation of this seven-point program we can build that morale which we shall desperately need in the days ahead.

FARMS INTO FACTORIES
Our Agricultural Revolution

By CAREY McWILLIAMS

WE HAVE BECOME AWARE of the industrial revolution in agriculture, not through its sharp contradictions but through the appearance on the highways, along the roadsides, and in the fields, of thousands of migrant farm families—through the lengthening shadow cast across the land by lean and gaunt and desperate people. Since 1929 our agricultural revolution—long "concealed," "hidden," and "unnoticed" as Peter Drucker has pointed out—has at last become evident.

The creation of the Federal Transient Service in 1935 was a recognition of the fact that the national government had become concerned with the migrant agricultural population. The Senate resolution (S.R. 298 in the 74th Congress) asking the Secretary of Labor to report "concerning the social and economic needs of laborers migrating across state lines" was another expression of the same concern. Then came the publication of *The Grapes of Wrath,* the LaFollette Committee hearings in California, the creation of the Tolan Committee, the Temporary National Economic Committee hearings on technological changes in agriculture, the WPA monographs on technological displacement in agriculture (part of the monumental National Research Project), and a wealth of special studies and papers from the agricultural colleges and from the various departments of government. Prior to 1929 the term "migrant," if it possessed any significance, was limited to the field of social work. Today it has come to have nation-wide significance. Overnight we have become conscious of a major national problem.

Since 1929, in fact, we have developed what might be called a "sociology of migration." When sociologists get to work in a new field, by some inveterate instinct, they begin to categorize and to classify. The tendency has been to isolate the problem of migration and to study it as a laboratory technician might study measles or the whooping cough. There has also come into existence a "psychiatry of migration." Migrants

have been interviewed and reinterviewed and the most elaborate schedules have been taken. ("Why do you migrate?" "What is your attitude toward religion?" "How many children do you expect in the near future?")

A mountainous accumulation of this sort of material has been gathered in the last decade. While it is unquestionably interesting, in a vague way, to know that among the migrants in Tulare County, California, there are so many "blue-eyed" boys and so many "black-eyed" girls, this type of information does not throw much light upon the major issues involved. It is for this reason that, elsewhere, I have sought merely to describe particular situations. In this paper, however, I want to describe in more general terms the nature of the process which, of recent years, has greatly increased the number of agricultural migrants. For the Mexican sugar-beet worker who has been "going to the beets" for twenty years and the latest Okie who sets forth on Highway 66 for California are both victims of the same process. They are casualties of "our agricultural revolution."

The Vortex of Industrialism

"Revolution," according to my pocket Oxford dictionary, means "reversal of condition—fundamental change." Without attempting to measure the total degree of change or to document statistically the pace of transition, just what changes have occurred in American agriculture in the last fifty years? Are these changes so fundamental as to be revolutionary in character?

Basically what has happened to American agriculture during this period, as Dr. Carl T. Schmidt has said, is that "farmers have been drawn into the vortex of industrialism." This change has been brought about by a process, not by any single factor. It is, therefore, impossible to point to any one element labeled "mechanization," "industrialization," or "commercialization" and to say, "This is *the* dynamic." Our agriculture is changing in many ways; it is the totality of these changes that constitutes the process to which I have referred. The following section does not purport to be an exhaustive catalogue of the changes that have occurred in American agriculture in the last fifty years. It is merely designed to demonstrate that the industrial revolution has finally hit the farmer; that the preview of agriculture, provided by the LaFollette Committee hear-

ings in California, actually does foreshadow the future of American agriculture.

Perhaps the first change in American agriculture that might be noted is a change in our concept of farming itself. Until fifty years ago agriculture, as Professor Roy Hinman Holmes has pointed out,[1] was the only important industry which had withstood the transforming forces of the industrial and social revolution of the nineteenth century. The patterns of land settlement and farming operation, laid down at the outset in American agriculture, were based upon the family as an economic unit. Because of the isolation of the farm, family ties tended to remain stronger in rural than in urban areas. Farmers went west, not to make fortunes, but to establish homes. The ideal, often unstated, was to keep the farm "outside the influence of competition." Dr. Paul S. Taylor quotes a Congressman Holman of Indiana who, in 1862, stated this ideal in the following terms:

> Instead of baronial possessions, let us facilitate the increase of independent homesteads. Let us keep the plow in the hands of the owner. Every new home that is established, the independent possessor of which cultivates his own freehold, is establishing a new republic within the old, and adding a new and strong pillar to the edifice of the state.

It was this ideal upon which our Homestead Acts were predicated. It was this concept of the farmer as "one who operates a family-sized farm for a living rather than an actual or potential modern fortune" which constituted the underlying premise of our agricultural economy. It is this ideal which still continues to influence the thinking of our legislators when they deal with the farm problem, despite the fact, as Bernard Shaw has pointed out, that three acres and a cow will no more make a man a farmer today than one acre and a telescope will make him an astronomer.

Today this concept of the "family-sized farm"—of the farm as homestead—has been thoroughly undermined not only in California but in the Western Cotton Belt, the Plantation Cotton Belt, the Wheat Belts in Oklahoma, Washington, and the Dakotas; in the Corn Belt; in the fruit, vegetable, and berry industries; in Maine and in Florida, in Tennessee and Montana. "We no longer raise wheat here," said a Washington wheat grower to Edwin Bates of the Department of Commerce in 1932;

[1] *American Journal of Sociology*, May, 1919.

"we manufacture it." In a proceeding before the National Labor Relations Board in California, J. Eliot Coit testified:

> The "farm" in the old or commonly accepted sense is long since obsolete in respect to the highly specialized agricultural occupation of growing such products as citrus fruits, walnuts, avocados, and a large number of other specialty crops grown on the Pacific Coast. In fact there are some farmers who do no manual work on their farms.[2]

Particular crops, such as potatoes, have passed almost completely into the orbit of industrialized farming, from Aroostock, Maine, to Florida; from Idaho to Tennessee. "A farm," wrote Samuel Crowther in 1927, "is only an industrial plant in which chemistry and the handling of materials are the predominant factors." To such an extent has our thinking about the farm changed, that Professor William S. Hopkins, of Stanford University, has referred to the earlier concept as mythological. Today the farm has come to be regarded as any other business enterprise. It is organized primarily to make money and only incidentally to provide farm families with a living.

This radical change of concept implies a gradual breakdown of cultural differences between rural and urban groups. It implies, as Dr. Holmes pointed out in 1919, the destruction by modern means of communication of the farm neighborhood group "based upon physical propinquity rather than mental congeniality." It implies, also, that the farming class, as such, is in the process of being broken up under the impact of the "selective forces of normal competition" from which farmers were, for a period, more or less protected. The spectacle of millions of farm families with no more material security than the poorest of city workers has greatly weakened our faith in farming as a mode of living. "Today," writes Dr. Taylor, "the march of mechanization and other economic forces have produced dependence and insecurity on the land for our generation."

Profound changes have occurred, in the last fifty years, in the economics of farm production. Formerly the farm was, to a considerable degree, a self-sufficient economic unit. Most of the farm family's food was produced on the premises; the family manufactured many articles required for domestic use. Barter was also an important prop to the maintenance of the family-sized farm. A number of developments, however, soon forced the farmers into the maws of a money economy. The stagger-

[2]Quoted by Dr. Paul S. Taylor before the TNEC.

ing accumulation of farm debt, occasioned by the rise in land values, made it imperative for farmers to concentrate on cash crops and to increase production. Rents paid by farmers to nonfarmers increased from $561,000,000 in 1910 to $829,000,000 in 1937; in 1909 farmers paid about $200,000,000 in interest on mortgage debt, in 1937 the amount paid for interest had increased to $400,000,000.[3] The practice of barter declined with the rise in farm debt. Insurance companies are not interested in accepting wheat and pigs in payment of interest or principal. Concentration on a cash crop involved neglect of home-grown produce.

The diversified farm tended to be replaced by the specialized one-crop farm. Specialization, as Leo Huberman has pointed out,[4] geared the farmer to a capitalist economy. Production for use or for sale in the local market gave way to production for exchange on the world market. By 1929 products "sold or traded" constituted 87 per cent of all farm products. As one farm industry after another was removed from the farm to the city, the dependence of the farmer upon a money income increased. Today more than half the gross farm income in the United States is consumed in cash payments necessary for carrying on farm production.[5] The spectacle of farmers buying butter, eggs, and bread in the nearest market illustrates the change that has taken place in farm production. Today the farmer is increasingly interested in the production of commodities for sale. The whole drift and bias of our culture has predisposed him to step up production, to increase his efficiency, to lower costs of production. The necessity for doing so has been dinned into him, not only by experience, but by almost every institution with which he comes in contact, from the agricultural college to the insurance company, from the local bank to the nearest agricultural adviser.

Another important barometer of change is the shift that has occurred in the amount and type of power used on farms. One reason why industry responded to the industrial revolution and agriculture did not, as pointed out by E. G. Nourse, is that the first types of power developed, namely steam and water power, could be utilized by factories but were generally not available on farms. Until about sixty years ago, animal power was

[3]O. E. Baker and others, *Agriculture in Modern Life* (New York, 1939), pp. 46, 50.

[4]Leo Huberman, *America, Incorporated* (New York, 1940), p. 40.

[5]Anna Rochester, *Why Farmers Are Poor* (New York, 1940), p. 79.

almost the sole source of power on farms; today it is of constantly diminishing importance. Between 1910 and 1930 the number of horses and mules on American farms declined 21 per cent. Even when other types of power were first introduced, agriculture was not in a position to use them with maximum efficiency. The efficient utilization of power requires large units of operation and a constant demand for power. There is sharp variation, between different sections, in the amount of power used on farms. Primary power varies, according to C. P. Kinsman, from as low as 1 h.p. per worker and 2 h.p. per farm in Alabama, to as high as 14 h.p. per worker and 22 h.p. per farm in South Dakota; while the horsepower hours actually utilized vary from 380 per worker and 730 per farm in Alabama to as high as 4,580 per worker in North Dakota and 10,000 per farm in California.

Power farming has greatly increased farm production by releasing thirty-five million acres of land formerly needed to produce feed crops for the production of crops for consumption. It is also one of the factors making for an expansion of the size of farm operations. The increased use of power, as California farmers have discovered, makes for a still further dependence upon a money income. It is merely another compulsion by which agriculture has been brought within "the vortex of industrialism."

Until recent years the occupational efficiency of the typical American farmer has been exceedingly low when compared with standards of efficiency maintained in other occupations. The family-farm economy did not permit such development in the division of labor. The farmer had to be an all-round expert; the hired hand had to be a jack-of-all-trades. "We expect each farmer," writes Bernard Shaw,

> to be able single-handed not only to plough and hoe, to reap and sow, but to be an agricultural chemist, a veterinary biologist, an accountant dealing with complicated costings, a statistician, a man of business skilled in buying materials and selling products, an up-to-date reader of Lord Bledisloe and the scientific investigators, and an expert in half a dozen other capacities utterly foreign to his antecedents. And his mere reaping and sowing keeps him working in his shirtsleeves for 16 hours a day to pay his rent and mortgage interest besides keeping himself and his family fed, clothed, and lodged.[6]

Nowadays, to be sure, we attempt to remedy the farmer's lack of specialized skills with bulletins and brochures, demonstrations and ex-

[6]London *Times,* October 1, 1940.

hibits. Through cooperative associations, many specialized problems, such as marketing, are shifted from the farmer to the farm-group. By and large, however, these developments have increased the operating efficiency of the large farm at the expense of the small farm. The cooperative associations tend to fall under the influence of the large growers. The agricultural advisor too frequently becomes the advisor for the top tier of farmers, for only they have the necessary plant and capital to put his suggestions into practice. The operating efficiency of the master farmers, furthermore, is steadily increasing, not only in relation to small farmers, but in relation to industry.

Emphasis on specialty crops has resulted in the development of special skills. The hired man of fifty years ago, fabled in story and verse and folklore, is being supplanted by the modern agricultural worker. We no longer have hired hands, but peach pickers, asparagus cutters, lettuce trimmers. Most of these vocations are highly skilled. Even "irrigators" have become a skilled group in California.

In the production of bulk or extensive crops, on the other hand, a different development has occurred. Here the substitution of machines for skill has made it possible as Peter Drucker notes,[7] to raise bulk crops on an industrial basis on large mechanized estates with the use of paid migrant labor. It is no longer necessary to maintain the hired hand throughout the year so that he will be available when needed. The increased use of migratory labor, paid on piece rates or an hourly basis, is further evidence of the fact that agricultural production is now developing division-of-labor techniques and profiting by the economies effected.

So much has been written of recent years on the mechanization of agriculture that slight comment is necessary. Ideal soil conditions, great reaches of level plains, rapidly expanding domestic and foreign markets, the shortage of labor (particularly during the Civil War when a million men were removed from American farms), and many other factors, have served from the outset to stimulate the use of machinery in American agriculture. Until as late as 1831, however, farmers here and abroad were largely employing the techniques of 3,000 years ago.

The enormous advances that have been made in techniques since 1831 may be divided into two general classifications. The period between 1831

[7] "The Industrial Revolution Hits the Farmer," *Harper's*, January, 1940.

and 1900 witnessed the introduction of the reaper, the steel plow, the threshing machine, grain drills, corn planters, harrows, cultivators, grain binders, and many other machines. These inventions were, however, all more or less specialized agricultural tools, relying upon the use of animal power, and increasing the productivity of the farmer without diminishing the need for his labor or skill. This period might, therefore, be called the mechanical, rather than the industrial, revolution in agriculture.

The period from 1900 to 1940 has been characterized by an entirely different development. The use of gas engines, automobiles, and tractors has revolutionized farm operations. The use of automobiles and trucks broke the isolation of rural life and set in motion forces which tended to undermine the enforced solidarity of the farm family. Swifter highway transportation revolutionized the means and methods of marketing crops. It is the tractor, however, which has been the real spearhead of the industrial revolution in agriculture.

Prior to the invention of the Farmall tractor in 1924, the use of tractors had been pretty largely restricted to the clumsier types of farm operations. The development of the all-purpose tractor subsequent to 1924 not only made possible the mechanical cultivation of row-crops, but it also brought about a radical revision in the design of the principal farm machines. These newer farm machines are essentially appliances to be attached to the all-purpose tractor. They are not mere tools to be used by the farmer; they extend the functions of the tractor, not of the farmer. It is for this reason that they strike at the very basis of independent farming. For they nullify, as Peter Drucker has said, the one competitive advantage which the owner or tenant-farmer in extensive farming held over the big estates: the cheap labor supply of his family.

It is this marked difference in effect, between the machines introduced since 1924 and those in use until then, that has caused observers to note that agriculture is now in the midst of an industrial revolution. Not only is the effect different, resulting in large-scale technological displacement, but the pace of transition is much swifter. On January 1, 1920, there were 246,083 tractors on American farms; five years later there were 505,933—a gain of 100 per cent. By 1930 there were 920,021 tractors in use, a gain of 82 per cent over 1925. Sales of the all-purpose tractor increased from 33.3 per cent of all tractor sales in 1931 to 71.3 per cent of all tractor sales in 1935. In 1936 tractor sales comprised 42 per cent of all types of

farm machinery sales in the United States—the highest proportion of tractor sales and the highest volume of such sales ever recorded in this country.

Since its invention in 1924, the all-purpose tractor has been steadily improved. In 1933 rubber tires were first introduced as standard equipment. Their use not only increased the efficiency of tractors, but it became possible to use tractors to haul other types of rubber-tired equipment along highways at a speed of from 8 to 15 miles per hour. Nor has the tractor by any means yet reached its maximum use or development. In 1938 an electrically powered tractor was exhibited. Today, according to Wheeler McMillen, an "automatically guided tractor is in successful use. Equipped with a simple device attached to the steering wheel which follows the furrow, and with safety attachments that stop the engine in case of trouble, the machine can be filled with gas, oil, and water and left to plow all day or through the night by its own lone self."[8]

As the all-purpose tractor proved its high utility, people had to revise their ideas about mechanization in agriculture. It had been said, at one time, that the tractor could never be used in the cultivation of row-crops. In the same way it is now said that machinery can never displace labor in the "stoop labor" operations required in the fruit, vegetable, and berry industries. But from the University of California, on April 10, 1940, came word that sugar-beet planters, toppers, and lifters had been perfected and that the hop picker is now in successful use in many localities. An internal combustion nut cracker has been developed which saws a tiny slit in each nut, squirts a little gas into it, explodes the gas, and causes the broken shell to fly away and leave the meat almost untouched. This little gadget will "displace half the hand labor now employed to crack California walnuts." A gigantic vacuum cleaner apparatus, attached to a tractor, harvests clover seeds in twelve-foot swaths. On November 23, 1935, the California *Cultivator* carried a story about a tractor-driven walnut picker which pushes an endless chain of mechanical fingers along the ground picking up walnuts, previously shaken from trees, at a rate of ten acres a day with 97 per cent accuracy. In May, 1937, a mechanical asparagus cutter was perfected. "From field to grinder," the hay harvest has been "mechanized almost entirely."[9] Cotton-chopping and cotton-picking ma-

[8] *Too Many Farmers* (New York, 1929), p. 14.

[9] *Southwest Business Review,* February, 1937.

chines are in the process of being perfected, as well as corn combines, sugar-cane harvesters, and sugar-beet lifters.

The conquest of the "stoop labor" operations by mechanization is being accelerated by a number of considerations. "Our stoop labor," notes a writer in the *Implement Record,*[10] "is getting too old to perform many of the jobs which they have previously done; in order that these jobs may be performed by our present labor, it will be necessary that machinery be made that will do this work satisfactorily." This has reference, of course, to the fact that much Mexican and Filipino labor is now approaching the border of old age and that the supply is not being kept at a constant level. Then, too, as the same journal pointed out,[11] "the fact that certain agricultural crops are extremely vulnerable to the strike encourages the farmer to be interested in dependable methods over which he has control. He has found the machine a faithful and dependable ally." In view of these developments, it is becoming obvious that almost every labor operation in agriculture not only can be, but will be, mechanized in the near future.

The effects of mechanization are many and varied. It makes for the consolidation of farm units; it increases the capital investment required for successful farming; it gives a decided advantage to the large-scale farm. An article in *Agricultural Engineering* for September, 1931, points out that the average small one-crop farmer is able to use a tractor only about 250 or 300 hours a year in California; while the large diversified farm is able to use a tractor for 3,000 hours a year. The more continuously machines can be used, the more production costs can be cut. "There are now few sections in the United States," a witness told the TNEC in 1940,

> where a man with no more capital than that required for a team of horses and horse equipment can begin farming. A tenant finds it difficult particularly in the corn and wheat regions to lease land unless he has a full complement of mechanical and horse equipment to operate the farm. The investment required to begin farm operations offers one explanation for the concentration of workers at the bottom of the agricultural ladder.

Mechanization not only increases production per farm, but makes possible a swifter and therefore a more certain harvest. Since mechanization has been more rapidly developed in planting and cultivating than in harvesting operations, it increases the reliance upon migratory seasonal

[10]November, 1937.

[11]February, 1938.

labor and decreases full-time farm employment. At the same time that it drives farmers from the land, it makes it more difficult for these same farmers to be resettled, since more and more capital goods are required for farm operations.

A great controversy has, of course, been waged for years over the extent to which mechanization in agriculture does result in the absolute displacement of workers. The major farm equipment houses subsidize the Farm Equipment Institute, which maintains an elaborate staff of "economists" and "agricultural consultants" all devoted to the task of minimizing the social effects of mechanization. It is unquestionably true that the use of machinery stimulates industrial employment, but for skilled industrial workers, not for agricultural laborers. The new employment opportunities are, moreover, created at places far removed from the areas in which displacement occurs. It is likewise true that mechanization does create some new employment on farms. The development of cheaper and smaller machines and the creation of farm machinery cooperatives also tend to offset certain effects of mechanization.

But the net result, the immediate result, of mechanization in agriculture is the displacement of farmers, farm tenants, and farm laborers. Fowler McCormick, Vice-President of International Harvester Company, in his testimony before the TNEC on April 24, 1940, admitted that "advancing technology sometimes results in displacement of labor." To state that displacement of workers does result on a large scale from mechanization is not to inveigh against the machine or to suggest that inventive faculties be shackled. It is merely to state a plain and obvious fact. "When labor personnel on the farm is released," writes Dr. William J. Hale,

> we observe something strictly akin to technological unemployment in the factory. Excess labor on the farm may, after all, remain on the farm because the farm offers so much for human provisioning. But, as a matter of fact, the labor here made unnecessary by agricultural progress is just as serious a problem as that in industry. It is virtually an *agrological unemployment*. This is the most helpless type of unemployment. It is cast-out humanity.

Not only has farm mechanization proceeded at an accelerated pace, but other technological advances of great importance have been made. "Only within the past half century," writes Wheeler McMillen, "has real study been made of the scientific problems within farming. Within

this time tremendous discoveries have been made, a remarkable volume of new knowledge created." These changes have to do with the development of new, and also improved, varieties of seed and stock; with the control of disease; with improved methods of weather forecasting; with more efficient methods of planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops; with soil use; with chemical fertilizers; with marketing techniques. Many of these developments are, in turn, related to mechanization. "The effective control of many insect pests, weeds, and plant diseases," points out the National Resources Committee in its *Technological Trends in Relation to Agriculture* (1937), "depends in large measure upon use of mechanical devices."

Still another change brought about by the revolution in agriculture has to do with the size and scale of farm operations. Years ago there was much excitement over the rise of "bonanza" farms in many areas of the United States. These great holdings showed a tendency to be broken up into smaller units. So marked was this tendency that the Industrial Commission on Agriculture reported in 1901[12] that "the farms of nearly every state are becoming smaller, and the great bonanza estates are being subdivided and sold."

These bonanza farms, however, were never industrialized in the modern sense. As Mr. McMillen states, "they were merely large aggregations of land upon which small farm methods were extensively used." Some of these great holdings, even so, survived the rise in land values which, in most areas, had resulted in subdivision and sale. As late as 1919, the Scully family owned and leased to others some 211,000 acres valued at $20,000,000. They operated, through tenants, 40,000 acres in Illinois, 64,000 acres in Nebraska, 60,000 acres in Kansas, and 47,000 acres in Missouri. Most of these holdings had been acquired by Thomas Scully, an Irish landlord, who, financed by the Rothschilds, purchased thousands of acres in the Middle West at two and three dollars an acre.[13] The Scully holdings, in these same states, are still quite extensive.

With the breakup of most of the bonanza farms, however, agitation over large land holdings abated, nor did it revive until the early '20's, when corporate farming was introduced. Yet the phrase "corporate farm-

[12]Vol. XI.

[13]*Current Opinion,* September, 1919.

ing" fails to indicate the real issue. In 1929 there were only about 9,211 corporations engaged in farming in the United States. The real issue has always been whether large-scale farming, corporate or otherwise, is increasing. Over twice as many large-scale farms are individually owned as are corporately owned.

One reason why corporate farming, as such, has not increased more rapidly than it has, is that certain states have constitutional provisions prohibiting corporate ownership of farm lands or restricting the period of time that corporations may hold title to farms. The facts about large-scale farming are: the medium-sized farms are now decreasing in number; the extremely small farms are increasing in number; and the large-scale farms are increasing both in number, size, and value of products grown.

In a report on the results of the 1940 census, Vergil D. Reed states that, compared with 1930, medium-sized farms (from 20 to 175 acres) decreased by 8.8 per cent, while the percentage increase of farms of 1,000 acres and over was 24.7 per cent. The tiny subsistence farms, twenty acres or less, increased 41.3 per cent. The increase in the number of subsistence farms does not really represent an increase in "farms" but an increase in rural residences. This is shown by the fact that the areas having the greatest increase in the number of farms of twenty acres or less were generally noted in industrial and mining sections where living on farms, due to improved transportation, could be combined with nonfarm employment. The same report notes "a general tendency toward consolidation of land into larger operating units throughout most of the nation, except New England and the Middle Atlantic States. . . . In the South a substantial increase in the land operated by owners and managers, coupled with a sharp decline in the number of croppers and tenants, indicates a trend to large operating units." In 1940 there were 100,531 farms of 1,000 acres and over, compared with 80,620 such farms ten years ago; there were 5,471 farms of 10,000 acres and over compared with 4,033 such farms in 1930.

Mere increase in the size of farm holdings does not tell half the story. Concentration of control in farm operations may be effected by any number of devices: through leases, crop purchase agreements, multiple farm operations, and similar methods. Perhaps the most significant tendency in the direction of concentration of control in agricultural production, is, as E. G. Nourse has pointed out,

> to be found in the case of the manufacturing or trading corporation which comes to engage in farming operations as a means of providing its own raw materials or the particular quality of farm products which its trade demands. Thus we find a canning company in New York raising 1,000 acres of its vegetables, a prominent rubber company securing its tire cloth and belt fabric by growing 1,110 acres of Egyptian cotton in the Salt River Valley, a big marketing concern in Chicago cultivating 1,300 acres of Wisconsin potatoes, a Pittsburgh rival operating large cantaloupe fields in the Imperial Valley, and another owning a dozen orchards.

This tendency is most marked in highly industrialized produce areas. Out of 141,727 acres owned by holders of 640 acres or more in Imperial Valley in 1939, 76,061 acres were owned by 26 nonresident corporations. The explanation for these holdings, according to the TNEC,[14] "lies in the fact that many of the large owners are shippers, handlers, or packers who have acquired ownership in order to insure themselves of sources of supply." There are many methods by which integration of this type can be effected. Nor do these figures purport to measure the increasing discrepancy between the productive capacity of large-scale farms (whatever their acreage) and small-scale farms stated in terms of value of crops produced. According to Dr. Carl T. Schmidt half of our farmers in 1929 produced 89 per cent of the total commercial output of American agriculture. "No doubt," he says, "these farmers could easily produce the remaining 11 per cent if prices offered them only a little encouragement. That is, the less productive half of our farms are not needed to feed and clothe nonfarm people—at least, on present levels of consumption."

Hazel Hendricks calls attention to many "farm factories" in areas other than in Arizona and California, where most of the large-scale farms are located.[15] She mentions Stokley Brothers and Company, with 7,545 acres in Tennessee and 27 plants in Indiana, Wisconsin, Delaware, Tennessee, Washington, Florida, Texas, and California; the Applecrest Orchard of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, largest apple producer of New England with its own packing plant, which last year produced more than 70,000 bushels of apples; Starkey Farms Company, owning asparagus acreage in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina; and the big Walker-Gordon dairy farm in New Jersey.

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[14] *Agriculture and the National Economy*, Monograph No. 23, 1940.

[15] *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1940.

From Knoxville, Tennessee, under date of December 25, 1940, comes a newspaper story telling of a new "potato factory" in Cumberland County. From 200 acres (certainly not a large farm so far as size is concerned), the owner of this factory produced 29,000 bushels of potatoes valued, because of their quality, at $50,000.

> Everything on this factory is done by modern machinery—everything from clearing the virgin land, uprooting, piling, and burning trees, to cultivating, planting, and harvesting and packing. Other big machines pull out lateral roots and rake and pile them to be burned. Then the ground is turned, harrowed, raked, and planted—all by machinery; likewise the crop is dug and gathered by machinery.

The industrial revolution has brought about important changes in the relationships existing between the various groups engaged in agricultural production. Farmers today are divided into two sharply antagonistic groups: "the upper strata of agriculture"—the phrase is that of Wheeler McMillen; and the lower strata. Big producers and master farmers versus "shiftless croppers, mean-spirited farmers, and dumb clods." It is utterly unrealistic any longer to refer to the "farm group" or the "farming class." The upper half of the farm group not only dominates production, but it controls the various marketing agreements, prorate programs, and crop-control committees. The local committees set up to administer various phases of the AAA program have been hailed as "the rise of economic democracy on the farm."[16] I have watched these committees function in California and have been wholly unimpressed with their "democracy." They are stacked, in practically every county, with representatives or stooges of the big farming interests. Reference to Dr. Carl T. Schmidt's testimony before the Tolan Committee will confirm this impression. In California farmers are divided into two hostile camps. They have divergent points of view on most social and political issues and war unceasingly over every major farm policy.

Changed, also, is the relationship between farm employer and farm employee. Formerly the hired hand was regarded as a member of the farm family who proverbially married the farmer's daughter. But, in 1926, a spokesman for California agriculture told his colleagues: ". . . the old-fashioned hired man is a thing of the past. . . . There is no place for

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[16]Department of Agriculture, *Achieving a Balanced Agriculture,* bulletin, April, 1940.

him, and the farmer who does not wake up to the realization that there is a caste in labor on the farm, is sharing too much of his dollar with labor. . . . We are not husbandmen. We are not farmers. We are producing a product to sell."[17] Between 1930 and 1940, two hundred and fifty strikes of agricultural laborers were reported in the United States, and, so inadequate are statistics on farm strikes, I am convinced the actual number was double this figure.

As in industry so in agriculture a wedge is being driven between ownership and management. Today the managerial concept is firmly established in agriculture. Its beginnings may be traced to the establishment by the Department of Agriculture, in 1904, of an office of farm management. The new concept, however, did not make much headway until 1919, when professional farm managers began to make their appearance.[18] With the 1929 depression, banks, insurance companies, and other lending agencies began to come into possession of hundreds of farms through foreclosure. Unequipped themselves to undertake the function of management, they turned to the farm management company to handle their newly acquired properties.

In a graduate thesis on file at Ohio State University, I. S. Cook has traced the beginnings of several typical farm management concerns. The first company of this type to make its appearance was the Farmers National Company of Omaha, Nebraska, formed in 1926. Soon after it was formed, the corporation took over the management of 103 farms belonging to one bank. In a few years the company was operating 700 farms —over 252,297 acres of farm land—in seven Middle-Western states. It had branch offices in Ames and Council Bluffs, Iowa; in Norfolk and Sidney, Nebraska. Mr. Cook points out that much of the success of this pioneer management company can be traced to factors other than its use of sound techniques. The banks had found, he states, that local managers were "provincial" in their attitudes. Sometimes they had relatives whose farms had been foreclosed; or, again, they might be disposed by reason of long friendship, to give a tenant "a break." The main objection to the individual manager was that "he hesitates to be firm because of involuntary community influence."

[17]See Dr. Paul Taylor's testimony before the LaFollette Committee.

[18]D. Howard Doane, *History and Growth of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers,* April, 1937.

The corporation, happily, is incapable of emotion, feeling, or susceptibility to moral considerations. Other large farm management corporations soon made their appearance and helped to solve the problem of "absentee ownership." The Doane Agricultural Service in St. Louis, formed in 1932, now manages 200,000 acres of farm land; the Decatur Farm Management Company of Decatur, Illinois, manages some 17,000 acres; the Farm Management Company, of Irwin, Ohio, manages 80 farms comprising some 22,000 acres. On May 27, 1929, the farm managers organized their own professional group, the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. A glance at any issue of the journal published by this society will serve to show how zealous the new management group is in the service of the moneyed interests it represents. "The economic basis of managerial service," Dr. Taylor told the Tolan Committee,

> is superior skill of professional managers over other farm operators, and the possibilities of collective buying and marketing, and of unified operations. These services offer genuine benefits to the landlord and to the land itself, and doubtless to some tenants. But it is equally plain that they promote (1) absenteeism by making it profitable; (2) united control of large acreages; (3) large-scale operations, by developing and utilizing its economies. The results are no part of the pattern contemplated by the Homestead Act.

In some cases the problem of management has been solved by lending institutions creating their own land-operations division. This is the solution to the problem adopted by the Bank of America in California. Through California Lands, Incorporated, a subsidiary, the bank operates hundreds of thousands of acres which it has acquired through foreclosure. The company maintains a central office in charge of accounting, sales, leases, and operations. Under operations the state is divided into districts, each in charge of a district manager who, in turn, has a number of supervisors under him. Each supervisor, with the aid of foremen responsible to him, is supposed to manage forty or fifty farms. I dare say that this pattern of farm operation was, also, hardly within the contemplation of the original Homestead Act.[19]

Even more striking are the changes that have taken place between farm and nonfarm groups. In 1915 there were 503 companies engaged in

[19]Howard Whipple, "Problems of the Bank-Owned Farm," *American Bankers Association Journal,* November, 1929.

the manufacture of tractors; by 1937 the number had been reduced to 25.[20] Formerly there were scores of farm machinery manufacturers; today there are eight "full line" companies and about 200 full line and "short line" companies. The business of manufacturing farm machinery, according to the TNEC reports, is a "nearly perfect oligopoly." Two firms dominate the industry, and 4 firms have effective control of the output; 8 or 10 firms control 90 per cent of the sales of 8 implements, 80 to 90 per cent of 4 implements, and 70 to 80 per cent of 5 implements. The results of such a striking concentration of control are obvious. "From 1929 to the spring of 1933, production of agricultural implements was reduced by 80 per cent, but the prices dropped by only 6 per cent. In contrast, agriculture reduced its production by 6 per cent, but its prices went down by 63 per cent."[21] These are the contrasts: six million farms all in competition —two farm machinery manufacturers working in perfect harmony; farmers unable to control prices effectively—the oligopoly controlling its prices rigidly. It is not surprising to find *Facts for Farmers* reporting (August, 1937) that the five largest farm equipment companies "cleared net profits of 46 million dollars in 1936." The importance of this changed relationship in so far as farmers are concerned is obvious: in 1939 the cost of farm machinery (depreciation and operating costs) amounted to about 21 per cent of cash income, compared with less than 7 per cent in 1913.[22]

Because of the inefficient basis upon which farm production has been organized, farmers have long been at a disadvantage in bargaining with nonfarm groups. But in former years it was primarily the banks and the railroads which held the whip hand. Because of the industrialization of agriculture, other industrial groups are now taking a large slice of the total farm income. These groups include: farm machinery houses; manufacturers of automobiles and tractors; refiners of gasoline and oil; canners; processors; power companies; shippers; terminal markets; chain stores; meat packers. "Quite apart from the possibility of deliberate monopolistic price-rigging by business," writes Dr. Schmidt, "the farmer is likely to be in a weak bargaining position both as buyer and seller."

The relationship between the average grower of orchard or vegetable crops and the cannery with which he deals, between the average sugar

[20]Harry G. Davis, *The Cavalcade of Farm Mechanization,* Chicago, 1937.

[21]Department of Agriculture, *Achieving a Balanced Agriculture,* 1940, p. 41.

[22]Testimony of Louis H. Bean before the TNEC, April, 1940.

beet grower and the sugar beet factory with which he deals—these and many similar relationships are different today from what they were two decades ago. For the farmer, once drawn into the "vortex of industrialism," must become as ruthless, as efficient, as powerful as the concerns with which he bargains or his interests will be subordinated to their interests. The monopolistic structure of industry stimulates "big business" in agriculture. It is likely to be paralleled by the rise of food trusts in which the production and the processing of food products are thoroughly integrated.

Important changes have occurred in the status, as well as in the relationships, of the different groups involved in agricultural production. The Industrial Commission on Agriculture in 1901 could find no evidence to warrant the "conclusion that the class of farmers will ever give place to one of tenants, or that the soil is to be monopolized by the rich." In 1937 the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy reported that "for the past 55 years, the entire period for which we have statistics on land tenure, there has been a continuous and marked increase in the proportion of tenants. Tenancy has increased from 25 per cent of all farms in 1880 to 42 per cent in 1935."

Owners, as a class, have not fared much better than tenants, for farm equities have declined catastrophically: from 62 per cent of the value of all farm real estate in 1880 to 39 per cent in 1935. At the bottom of the famous agricultural ladder are the farm laborers. What their present status is may be illustrated by sample annual earnings per worker, for various crops, as estimated by Carl C. Taylor in his testimony before the TNEC: tobacco, $188; grain crops, $206; truck crops (New Jersey), $265; corn (Illinois and Iowa), $308; sugar beets, $340.

For years a studied attempt has been made to rationalize this unmistakable evidence of distress (increased tenancy, shrinking equities, miserable annual earnings) as the "farm problem." A library of documents has been written on the "tenancy problem"—usually isolated from all other considerations and regarded as some mysterious disease growing out of the relationship between landlord and tenant. Every effort has been made to impersonalize the causes of the farm problem. To suggest that the problem might be merely one phase of the imperfect functioning of our economic system—to hint that capitalism had transformed agricultural production, to allude to the industrial revolution in agriculture—is to invite the wrath of the bureaucrats. The Populists in 1890, with all their

noisy talk about Trusts and Wall Street and the Money Power, were closer to the reality of the farm problem than we seem to be today. To rob farm unrest of its militancy and to preserve our illusions about "farming as a way of life," we paid more to farmers in 1939 than it took to run our federal government in 1916.[23] But despite all our efforts to protect the farmer against the competitive influences at work in modern society, he has been inextricably drawn into the "vortex of industrialism."

All of these changes, technological and mechanical, of the last fifty years, have enormously increased actual and potential agricultural production. Between 1910 and 1930 output per worker in agriculture increased 41 per cent; from 1922 to 1926 production increased 27 per cent with crop acreages remaining almost unchanged. With crop acreages not expanding (or even contracting) and with the number of workers employed in agriculture constantly decreasing, production in the aggregate and productivity per worker have steadily increased. The Malthusian formula of population pressing upon production has, as O. E. Baker points out, been almost completely reversed: production now outstrips effective demand. Fewer farms, fewer farmers, greater production.

Corn Belt

To appreciate the far-reaching implications of the changes outlined in the preceding section, it might be well to consider the transformation now taking place in the heart of our agricultural empire. The Corn Belt of the Middle West represents, in our folklore, American agriculture in its sturdiest traditional form. Yet even here the industrial revolution is transforming the social landscape.

In eight Middle Western states in 1934 was to be found 75 per cent of the 101,000,000 acres of grade A cultivable land in the United States and 36 per cent of the nation's 211,000,000 acres of grade B land. Yet in this rich and protected agricultural empire were to be found only 24 per cent of the farm population: one-fourth of the farmers of America tilling one-half of the best crop lands. Nor were these farmers secure either in status or in tenure. The loss of farm units in the five Corn Belt states (Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) in the last five years has been staggering. Between 1935 and 1940, according to P. G. Beck of the Farm Security Administration, 70,000 farming units have "disappeared" in these

[23]Speech of Dr. Ira Cross, University of California, March 20, 1940.

five states: 16,146 farms "vanished" in Missouri; 16,197 in Indiana; 17,681 in Ohio; 12,853 in Illinois; 10,000 in Iowa. "Here in the Middle West," writes Mr. Beck, "our agricultural press and daily newspapers are raising the question whether or not we must make a choice between family-sized farms or, as one paper put it, *The Grapes of Wrath.*"

Modern technology is changing the Corn Belt into a great factory district. Over 65,000 mechanical corn pickers are now in use in the Middle West. A one-man, one-row picker will husk and throw into a wagon the corn of eight or ten acres per day, displacing five or six men. Beginning in 1936 the use of hybrid corn has resulted in increased yields of about 20 per cent over other varieties. Without any increase in acreage, production has been increased, costs lowered, and the number of workers reduced. The mechanical corn picker in Iowa, in 1937, is reported to have replaced between 15,000 and 20,000 men formerly employed at hand picking. Since 52 per cent of the cost of producing corn is represented by power and labor, machinery means not only ease but also profits, for those able to avail themselves of the new methods.

The mechanical corn picker is, moreover, merely one of many innovations. Four-row power-driven corn planters, three- and four-row tractor-driven corn cultivators; side-delivery hay rakes, mechanical hay stackers, sweep rakes, hay loaders, slings for unloading produce, modern manure spreaders, grain elevators, portable feed grinders, and other devices have almost completely mechanized farm operations. Rubber tires on tractors are followed by rubber tires on combines, plows, and other machines. Headlights make possible night work by shifts. Mobility of labor and machinery expands the radius of farm operations. "Mechanization," according to Dr. Taylor, "moves progressively into every phase of farm production."[24]

It is primarily mechanization that has resulted in the consolidation of farm units in the Corn Belt. Per acre investment costs of power and machinery are materially reduced on larger farms. As one expert puts it: "Noticeable economy is effected in per acre cost, investment, and repair cost of machinery as the size of the farm increases." The use of machinery not only displaces workers, but it permits fewer men to operate larger acreages. Consolidation of farm units is, therefore, inevitable. Over 6 per

[24]Testimony before the Tolan Committee.

cent of Iowa's farm families were pushed off the land between 1936 and 1939. The Tolan Committee was told that some 25,000 farmers are unable to rent farms in the Corn Belt. Dr. Taylor tells of one Iowa farmer who three years ago began to add to his farm operations. He leased 40 acres three miles from his home place, 440 acres six miles away, and 320 acres seventy-five miles away. He now operates a thousand acres of the best cash-grain lands of Iowa with two laborers hired by the month. The use of the mechanical corn picker, the TNEC found, coincides almost perfectly with the areas in which hired workers previously found employment during the harvest season.

Displaced farm families (2,000 new "landless" tenants were put on the road in Iowa in 1940) cannot meet the competition for leases and are forced to migrate. They either move into the poorer farming districts or into urban areas or they become migrants. Mechanization results in competition for land, since it lowers costs and increases production, and this competition soon increases rent. The undercapitalized operator can not meet this competition.

Mechanization has also stimulated the use of "custom work" which, in turn, displaces resident farm labor. Nowadays it is possible for a farm owner to contract with a custom work crew to take over almost any given agricultural labor operation. Farm management services do a flourishing business. Absentee ownership becomes profitable and more city people become farm owners. Dr. Taylor quotes the following comment in his testimony: "It's now the rage to buy farms, partly for diversion instead of golf, partly as a safe place to put funds." In some Middle-West cities business men who own farms have formed "farmers' luncheon clubs" and sit around, over the coffee and cigars, discussing their "farm problems." Formerly capital was invested in agriculture primarily in the form of mortgage loans; today the farm enterprise itself is coming to be regarded as a profitable field for the investment of capital. Corporation farming and "chain farming" are developing in the region. The Collins Farm Company of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was, on January 1, 1931, operating 150 farms, totalling 27,496 acres and scattered over 31 counties in northern Iowa.[25] Its employees punch time clocks.

[25]Orville Kile, *The New Agriculture* (New York, 1932), p. 90.

The net result of these changes in the Corn Belt is clearly stated in an editorial in the Des Moines *Register* of March 3, 1940, quoted by Dr. Taylor in his testimony before the TNEC:

> Larger farms mean fewer farms; fewer farms and more mechanization mean fewer farmers and their families. And this means keener competition among tenants for farms, with greater insecurity for those who get farms and many who do not get farms. It means a larger transient population, moving from county to county, state to state . . . it means a larger agricultural proletariat class.

The process at work in American agriculture, of which the changes in the Corn Belt are merely one illustration, is not unlike that which resulted in the enclosures in Great Britain, so graphically and memorably described by Karl Marx. The social and political implications of this process of change need scarcely be emphasized. "A revolution," Professor William Hopkins told the Tolan Committee,

> is now in progress. There are no bewhiskered, bomb-throwing revolutionists sitting in dark cellars plotting its course. Its dynamics are greater, more cosmic, than revolutionists. It cannot be stopped or driven underground by congressional investigations. It seems to be with us whether we like it or not. It is destined to change our whole way of life, our traditions, and our concept of the farmer as the backbone of American democracy.

This revolution strikes deep. It is probably more important, in the view of O. E. Baker, in its implications than the Protestant Reformation or the Industrial Revolution. Unless something is done within the next decade, writes the chairman of the 1938 farm tenancy committee in Iowa, "it will bring about and develop such unrest among our people that it will threaten our democracy."

"The Grapes of Promise"

The industrial revolution in agriculture has already begun to be succeeded by the chemical revolution. Agriculture, chemistry, and industry, "the new triumvirate," propose to convert the farms of America into "great chemical manufacturing plants." Formal recognition of the new trend that the revolution in agriculture is taking occurred in May, 1935, with the organization of the National Farm Chemurgic Council at a conference held at Dearborn, Michigan. The moving spirit in this enterprise was the late Francis P. Garvan. He it was who induced President Woodrow Wilson to confiscate the German patents during the last World War and turn the proceeds over to the Chemical Foundation. It was

from funds donated by the Chemical Foundation, while Mr. Garvan was chairman, that the National Farm Chemurgic Council was formed.

There can be no question about the importance of the farm chemurgic movement. It promises to revolutionize still further our concept of farming. Once the farm was something of a factory, but with the industrial revolution the factory phases of agriculture were divorced from the farm. Now chemurgy promises to restore them, by converting the farm into a factory for the manufacture of chemical compounds. Since the formation of the National Farm Chemurgic Council, $150,000,000 has been invested in chemurgic enterprises in this country. At the prompting of the Council, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 contained provision for the establishment of four regional research laboratories to experiment in the development of new uses for agricultural products. At its prompting also, Michigan State College recently received $500,000 from the Rackham Foundation for chemurgic research.

Dazzling, indeed, are the vistas which chemurgy opens before the hard-pressed farmer. It is estimated that fifty million acres can be planted to so-called "industrial crops" in the next ten years. While such estimates should be discounted, it is nevertheless apparent that the possibilities for the use of agricultural products as chemical compounds are almost unlimited. Agricultural products may be used to make anhydrous alcohol; they may be used in plastics. Almost eighty million bushels of corn are now "refined" to make such by-products as dextrin, syrup, and sugar; starch is made from sweet potatoes; soybean meal can be used to make upholstery for automobiles. Almost every agricultural by-product can be utilized in some form. Cotton stalks, cottonseed hulls, and even cotton burrs can be converted into important by-products. Over ninety thousand pounds of a new oil were manufactured in 1939 from grapefruit seeds. Cotton, mixed with cement, makes an excellent shingle for roofing. Many new crops, such as soybeans, sunflowers, and castor beans have important industrial uses.

Many of our leading industrialists have been quick to recognize the importance of the farm chemurgic movement. The National Farm Chemurgic Council was formed at a meeting at Dearborn sponsored by the Ford Motor Company. The great chemical plants, the soap manufacturing companies, the farm machinery concerns, the paint and varnish industry, the powder manufacturing companies, have all been deeply interested in

chemurgy. The Ford Motor Company operates farms of its own and has built a number of plants for the processing and treatment of soybeans. It not only uses soybean oil in the manufacture of enamel, and as an oil in its foundries, but it uses soybean meal to make plastics. In the production of a million American automobiles, it is now estimated that the agricultural products from a half million acres are used. Even such a concern as Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company is vitally interested in a large number of farm products, such as oat hulls for making furfural; molasses; alcohol; dextrin; and wheat flour for making cores. It even purchases a considerable amount of hay and straw.

So excited has Louis J. Taber, Master of the National Grange, become in the farm chemurgic movement, that he writes in one of the Council's publications that it is time for American farmers to "turn from *The Grapes of Wrath* with its hate and despair, to the Grapes of Promise (chemurgy) and the open door of opportunity." The door which chemurgy opens, however, is a door for industry, not for agriculture. The new methods and processes of chemurgy, as Peter Drucker says, represent economic progress precisely because they project the industrial principles of specialization and of the division of labor into farming. "They thereby raise the amount of capital needed for the attainment of a livelihood on the land beyond the reach of the independent family-farm."

Active leaders in the chemurgic movement include such consistent advocates of big business in agriculture as Wheeler McMillen and Dr. William J. Hale of the Dow Chemical Company. In a volume on chemurgy Dr. Hale has found occasion to indulge in one of the most outright eulogies of National Socialism yet published in this country.[26] In laying down the conditions upon which industry might be willing to "cooperate" with agriculture in the chemurgic program, L. F. Livingstone of the E. I. DuPont de Nemours and Company made it quite clear that agriculture must first recognize that "farming is a business, not merely a vocation, and it must be treated as any other business." Speaking at the Second Mid-American Chemurgic Conference in Cleveland on September 17, 1940, N. R. Whitney of Proctor and Gamble Company

[26] *Farmward March* (New York, 1939), pp. 174, 176, 202.

(a corporation that operates a large farm in Ohio) observed of the future of American agriculture:

> Farming in America will become more of a business and less of a way of life. That this process has long been under way is evidenced by the fact that the percentage of our population in rural areas has steadily declined, and the size of the average farm has constantly increased. . . . In recent years there has been a marked growth in absentee ownership with increasing dependence on professional farm management. This changing emphasis in farm ownership and management will be accentuated by the war since the demands for labor in industrial plants associated with war and the preparation for war will draw labor from the rural areas. . . . The tendency toward farming as a business will also be promoted by the intense competition that will be faced after the war by our agricultural industry. This will necessitate a lowering of production costs through the operation of larger farm units, greater mechanization, and the use of fewer people and work animals, improvement in methods of farming, in seed selection, in animal breeding, in the use of fertilizers, and in many other ways.

Whatever "open door" the great industrial and chemical interests have in mind for American agriculture, it is most certainly not an open door for the millions of people now dependent upon agriculture for a livelihood. These people, like the work animals with which they are equated by Mr. Whitney, will find fewer work opportunities in the future. While chemical research does promise to revolutionize our concept of agriculture, we may be sure that the migrant farm families of today and tomorrow will not be the beneficiaries of the new dispensation. The chemurgic farm of the future will most likely be integrated with the particular chemical or industrial plant to which it feeds raw materials. Ford, ever the innovator, has already acted to control those farm products upon which his plant is dependent. As other industries come to recognize a like dependence, they will unquestionably exercise the same precaution. "The Grapes of Promise," on inspection, seems to bear a fatal resemblance to "The Grapes of Wrath."

THE CHURCH AND ITS CRITICS

By FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

FOR A GOOD MANY YEARS I have been in a position to hear all types of criticism of the Church, or of the churches, and to estimate somewhat from the inside, the worth of the criticisms. My opinion is that many who find fault with the Church, looking upon it from the outside, take their strictures too seriously, and that those inside the Church do not take the criticisms seriously enough. The reason for this is that, in the form in which anti-Church criticism is today expressed, it may not have much point; but that essentially there is a core of justice in the criticism, though the form in which it is uttered makes it easy to reply to it and yet equally easy to miss its significance.

Putting aside theological and ritualistic questions and looking at the criticisms which have to do with the general policies or activities of Protestant churches, we meet the wide-spread charge that the churches are split up into virtually warring groups without any principle of unity among themselves. Some of this criticism comes from scornful Communists—who by the way until a few years ago were divided into belligerent camps of Trotskyites and Stalinites; some from writers for high-brow magazines who professedly deplore the inability of Protestant religion to produce on the world the psychological effects of unity—this too in journals which are always looking for and playing up whatever promises to be "different."

We all know that there was a time when the denominations did fight one another. In a day when the chief aim of church effort was to get men into heaven, the partisans of each denomination held that heaven was virtually the special privilege, the vested interest, of his own group. Even Calvinism, which has often been painted as a hard system, was not especially hard for Calvinists. Who ever saw a Calvinist who was not confident that he himself was one of the elect? This partisan loyalty had its own rewards.

Today the churchman will not take seriously the charge that the denominations are fighting one another. Indeed they are not, but just

saying this does not help us much, for though there is no warfare, each is too much centered in itself. The denominations are not yet united in a federal system, even though we give all possible credit to the Federal Council of Churches—one of the most amazing agencies of cooperative effort Christianity has thus far seen. They are held apart, to mention a single phase of a complex situation, by the fact that great church central boards have invested funds, grants-in-aid, in particular church enterprises, and are bound in many cases by secular law to see that the funds are paid back if the church thus aided ceases to exist. This keeps many a church alive after it is dead, especially in small communities. We all talk about the over-churched condition of rural and small-town communities, but we have a long way to go to make any substantial improvement.

The aim of any nation-wide Christian organization is that the members develop a double loyalty, the devotion to the individual congregation and the devotion to the whole Christian movement. The United States has achieved an aim like this in its federal system; Great Britain has made long strides toward it in its Commonwealth of Nations. The Protestant churches—no. Their unconscious but real emphasis is on the parts and not on the whole. Will any one with experience with mission boards, even in a single denomination, believe that these missionary groups themselves, if left to themselves, would work with one another toward a common plan? If so he ought to attend a meeting of whatever may be the central agency which allots the funds among the various groups. Does any one think that when a man becomes a missionary he does so with an interest in the whole non-Christian world? The missionary is pro-Chinese or pro-Japanese or pro-African or pro-Indian. This lends vast strength to the missionary appeal, but at considerable cost to some facts of Christianity which we usually regard as essential. The fiercest anti-missionary speech I have ever heard was made years ago against missionary work in Africa by a speaker who was himself a missionary in China. The development of an ability to see the whole while recognizing the importance of the part is quite as much a need of Protestant religion today as it has ever been, though there is no fighting of the old style. The difficulty here is the same as with the New Deal in America. As soon as the government starts to put the New Deal into effect, each form of business hires professional advocates to prove that it is exceptional and must not be touched.

I have stated this strongly so as to give the charge full force. Admitting the force, we have to affirm that the Protestant churches are almost alone in their seeking to develop, week in and week out, all over the world, an altruistic world-mind, through various missionary agencies whose likenesses in message and method are greater than their differences.

A charge formerly made was that the Church, or the churches as such, do not know what is going on in the world in which we live. We do not hear this very often just now. Indeed, the accusation is now more often made that ministers ought not to talk about industrial matters, especially those they do not understand. This is one of the stratagems by which supporters of evil in the present social system seek to weaken the force of the attack of the Church. It is true that ministers here and there talk foolishly, especially when they discuss details of industry or finance about which they are not informed. On the side of the human results in industry, however, a faithful pastor is expert enough to start something. Years ago—to take a question which will not raise wrath just now—the steel industry in this country did not pay enough heed to safety appliances in the mills. Whereupon humanitarian workers, ministers included, began to call attention to the cost in human life and limb in making steel. Whereupon, again, the steel operators sneered that before preachers talked about the casualties in the steel industry, they ought to learn something about the steel industry. How many preachers, asked one, knew what a "bloom" was? Not many, probably, but every one of them knew that when he was called to a funeral somebody was dead, and most of them asked what was responsible for the death. Or, if they called on an injured man, they asked how the sufferer got hurt. Too often ministers heard in those days that a white-hot ribbon of steel had struck the laborer, or at least touched him with a sting worse than that of a cobra. Set it down to the preachers' credit that they helped change this state of things; and set it down to the credit of the steel men that they finally went the limit in making their industry as safe as any work of the kind can be made.

Any diligent pastor in an industrial community knows more about the human welfare of the workers in the industry than do all the controlling officials of the industry. The intelligent observer of the Church is well enough informed to know that the charge that the Church obscures

the needs of the present life by preaching about the life to come is moth-eaten. The underprivileged are not exhorted "to live on hay" here so that "by-and-by they may eat pie in the sky." Any one who ever goes inside a church knows that this criticism today is a survival of far-off forgotten things and battles long ago. It would be more appropriately urged against the preachers that they have too little to say about "life in the sky," or immortality. Yet the careful student soon sees that summary disavowal of this kind is too sweeping and too simple. The Church indeed does not say much now about the life that is to come, but relies too much on emphasis on the "long run." It takes itself, conservative as it usually is, as among the "slow-but-sure" working forces of the world. Things are in a bad way now, but the Church is on the side of the ages. Everything is to be set right in the end. We are to work for the long future!

Now this long-run doctrine at times is of supreme value and at others an encouragement to intellectual drift and laziness. It is of course our duty to work for the generations of the future, but is such duty of any more weight than that of seeking to help the people now alive? This exhortation to interest in the future is most of it nonsense. We are all interested in our children and our grandchildren, but our interest in what our great-grandchildren may be and do is very faint. Anyhow, the best way to help our descendants is to do the best we can for the human beings who are here now.

What now can the Church do about wide-spread social evils? Well, it can do what the prophets in all ages have done: protest, or rather, *kick*. Its duty is not to wait till it can make "constructive" suggestions. If the Church can make enough uproar over evil social conditions, public opinion will give heed, and the next stage will arrive when those responsible for actually changing the situations change them. I refer now to those with the requisite physical, industrial, and social technique—intelligent legislators and expert managers and public-spirited social engineers. The function of the Church in the social realm is chiefly to create the atmosphere in which some things can be done and other things not be done. As long as so many features of present society are in flat contradiction to everything the Church is supposed to stand for, it is in order to ask the Church to quit talking so much about the long run and have a little more to say about the short run. True, the Church cannot tell just how changes are to be made, but that does not discharge it from the warfare of de-

claring that they must be made. Which feature of modern social life is suggestive of any one of the Beatitudes?

All this provokes the churchman who declares that it is the business of the Church to give its attention to the conversion of individuals and to let the larger social questions solve themselves through the righteousness of the transformed individuals.

Heaven defend us all from minimizing the importance of the transformation of individuals—the only supreme realities in society—into beings of good will; but suppose all persons on earth were suddenly to be converted to good will. That would be the most important single event in the social history of mankind, but it would leave swarms of our problems just where they were before, to be solved by hard thinking and harder work. An eloquent orator once defined heaven as a realm where there would be no laws but only gentlemen's agreements. From which the puzzling reflection arises: "But gentlemen do not always agree." Verily, a difficult task—this of getting gentlemen to agree. Moreover, it is always well to remember the judgment of Voltaire that the interests of society are safer in the hands of men who know they are imperfect than in those of the self-righteous men, for the admittedly imperfect have some conscientious restraints of normal human misgiving, and the self-righteous think that whatever occurs to them can come only out of a spirit of righteousness, and is all-sufficient. Righteous intentions are not the sole requisite for social reform. Indeed, taken by themselves, they may do harm.

Next we have to give heed to the critic who tells us that the ministers of the churches cannot speak freely, that they cannot exercise freedom of speech. Here again we can enter a disavowal which has to be qualified. There is in the Church itself today little direct interference with pulpit utterance. I have been in the ministry for over forty-five years and in all that time no bishop, no board of trustees—nobody—has ever told me beforehand what I could, or could not say. There has at times been an uproar after it has been said, but that is legitimate enough. A statement like this, however, may create a misleading impression. Usually radicals are marked with peculiarities that easily give offence: their voices are not pleasant, their manners unconventional, in personal contacts they are not always amiable. Thus accusers do not get down to their real grounds of complaint, but charge offensive personal qualities. The radical is declared to be lacking in "tact," or given to saying things that may be true,

but saying them at the wrong time. The attempt to get him out of a pulpit is colored by an effort to create an atmosphere in which he may not get a friendly or even an open-minded hearing. The "demand" for him is to be destroyed. I say that this is the usual method, though admittedly it seldom succeeds in depriving the radical of his pulpit. It does, however, partially destroy the effectiveness of his utterance.

This from the inside of the church of which the alleged disturber may be a minister. There is today direct attack upon outspoken ministers, but the attack is from the outside: from self-appointed guardians of the established order, from haters of everything foreign, from assemblies of blazing patriots whose energies are exhausted in blazing. Usually these assailants do not have the slightest idea of what a church is for. One such interviewed me some time ago with a request that I urge churches to get back to the old-fashioned gospel. Inasmuch as this particular person had never shown much interest in any gospel, old-fashioned or new-fashioned, I asked why he longed for such a revival. He replied that it would help us get rid of the present national administration.

The Church itself is, for the most part, kindly toward its ministers; but it does become too disturbed over this outside criticism from those who would like to use the Church for their own purposes. Do not such critics need to be interested in the Church for the help that they can give the Church and that the Church can give them? My observation is that they certainly do need the Church as a character-reforming agency, but that the Church does not need them. Any attempt on the part of the Church to "please" this type of prospective communicant involves dreadful cost to the higher integrity of the Church itself.

The most effective method that denominations now use against great social evils is the utterances of the supreme bodies governing the denominations as a whole. He who thinks that such statements of principles adopted by the chief assemblies of the denominations do not count for anything ought to be so placed that for a little while he may get the reactions from the forces who find themselves criticized. The social creed of the churches has done incalculable good in promoting social betterment throughout the United States. Out in the smaller communities, however, these general pronouncements are likely to be received with suspicion by the churches themselves, partly through the small communities' customary tendency to suspicion, partly because the livelihood of the dwellers

in small neighborhoods is more definitely dependent upon this or that mill owner, or director, or this or that banker. Here is a real danger and churches have not been overbold in meeting it. I once heard Bishop Charles Gore of England say that this condition in England stops the rectors in the small parishes from standing for the advanced social teaching of the leaders of the Church of England. It is a commonplace that New York City is more hospitable to free speech than any other city in the United States, though what appears like hospitality may be nothing but indifference.

Perhaps all that I have said may be summed up in the admission that the activities of the Church are to a large degree shaped by the temper of the age in which we live and, inasmuch as the age is capitalistic, the Church is influenced by capitalistic standards. This is inevitable. Woodrow Wilson, in a defense of the study of the classics, once declared that in a scientific age it is almost impossible to keep the gases of the scientific method from getting over into the study of the classics—where they are poison. Similarly it is hard to keep the poison gas from competitive capitalism out of church activities. Gas is hard to fight against because it is invisible. The church that breathes it may be half-dead before it realizes that anything is wrong. Admitting that the Church is not at all ready for any thoroughgoing transformation of the social order, it cannot be excused for its persistent refusal to redeem that order from what Matthew Arnold called its Philistinism—by which he meant its materialism, its vulgarity, its brutality.

Here we meet the accusation that the Church does not welcome heartily enough the suggestions as to its duty by all sorts of social experts outside the Church. In fact, the Church is too deferential toward such suggestions. A scientist announces that God geometrizes. The pulpit finds in this the scientist's endorsement of theism and takes fire with a new eloquence. The extent of thrill the pulpit has got out of the conception of God as a geometer is quite remarkable, considering the nature of geometry. Thus all along the line of current literature, which is important enough in its way—but its way is not often toward the Church. If the Church would take seriously the Christian teaching that men are ends-in-themselves, not to be taken as tools or stuff to be exploited by anybody, it would have an authority coming out of that essential Christianity and would not need any other social message. This essential is perhaps the

greatest single contribution of the Church to modern democracy, that and the factor on which Principal Lindsay of Balliol College, Oxford, has laid such stress—its existence as units of "free and voluntary associations" in which the "sense of meeting" is arrived at after free discussion. When we say that the American Revolution was won in the meetings of the New England Congregational churches, we do not mean that those churches discussed war plans. We mean that the churches as voluntary associations were centers and cells of democratic method which helped develop the American demand for national independence. The procedure itself created the democratic spirit.

There has not been a time when the Church has had a chance to serve society and itself comparable to that of today. In this world where so much is relative, the doctrine of the Church as to the worth of a man is as near absolute as anything can be. The current emphasis of Fascism and Nazism on force makes it imperative for the Church to declare anew the sacredness of man, and to stand for it at whatever cost.

If a man's life is above all other realities on earth sacred, the right to speak out on that sacredness is itself sacred. If democracy is to be saved, it can be saved only by guarding the right of freedom of speech—and that is a primary duty of anything worthy to be called a Church.

We must have a care lest, even in our noble effort toward vast organizational unity, the unity may be purchased at too heavy a cost. Unless there are encouraged in these huge organizations minority groups of the exploratory mind and spirit, those who can run on ahead of the rest of us and break new paths, we shall have a mastodonic ecclesiasticism which will resemble nothing so much as those monster forms which for geologic ages splashed about in prehistoric swamps.

All this may sound severe and even cynical. Let me say then, that in comparing the Church not with an absolute ideal but with other social organizations, it is far and away ahead of them, even at the points where criticisms seem most just. It is, however, the glory of the Church that it dares to judge itself by the absolute ideal of the New Testament, even the ideal of moral perfection. It is the recognition of that standard that at times seems to cause it to make such a poor showing. Yet the ideal itself can be and often is abused by making it an excuse for doing nothing *now*. One contribution of the Church is the insistence on an absolute ideal which must not be tampered with. The Church recognizes that perfection

cannot be attained in knowledge, or act, or moral conduct, but insists that the ideal be aimed at in any effort. This is a paradox that holds in any sphere of progressive human endeavor.

The temptation of the Church is to proclaim an absolute, and then having declared the absoluteness of the worth of men, to say nothing about concrete situations, which in most cases is to say just nothing at all. Every absolute declares itself in something relative. There are relative values in human beings—values peculiar to race, nationality, culture—personal qualities which at particular moments are of supreme importance. To recognize and deal with these is the only way to make real the religious absolute or any absolute. In philosophy certain values are called "timeless," but they can only be made real by action this instant, let us say. The Church declares its belief in timeless, eternal justice to men. Such eternal justice, however, must be acted upon now in situations relative to given times and places. Moreover, outside of philosophy, the "Now" is not eternal. It has to be seized in the fraction of a second. Thus the Church, if it is to meet the test of being worth while to men, has to hold in full view both the Timeless and the timely. Speaking in the old-fashioned phrase, the Church in its warfare against the Devil too often waits to see first what the Devil is going to do. Whereupon the Church loses the initiative. This is "poor timing." The evil forces choose their course and then the Church starts forth to pursue the Devil in what the seamen call a "stern" chase, and that chase is long—very long. The Church ought to keep the initiative, pick its points of attack, and force the fighting.

HOW ENGLAND CONTROLS INFLATION

By ERNEST DALE

WAR FINANCE is not the problem of finding the money to pay for the war. As Sir Ernest Cassel, one of the leading financiers of the last war, put it: "When money is wanted, money will be found," meaning that raising the money is an easy matter. War finance is not the problem of finding the men and materials: they will be found by direct methods. War finance is the problem of how a dwindling supply of goods left over for civilian consumption is to be distributed within a rising supply of purchasing power in the hands of the people. The excess of purchasing power over civilian goods is the "gap," and war finance is the never-ending "battle of the gap." The best way of closing the gap is to increase the supply of consumption goods so that it equals the excess of purchasing power. But generally a country cannot have guns and butter, and if it does, it will lose both, for it will be defeated in battle. The worst way of closing the gap is to let the purchasing power of the people compete until prices have risen to such heights that all excess of purchasing power is absorbed. That is inflation, which destroys national morale. The right way to close the gap is to use a number of measures—taxation, savings, rationing expenditure. These measures may assume different forms, some less pleasant than others. Taken as a whole they form the basic weapons of successful war finance.

Before we review the weapons used in this battle, we must discuss the word "gap." The idea is as old as the subject of war finance itself. The concept, however, is new and unfamiliar. It may be applied either to the physical or to the financial problems of war economics. Applied to physical problems, the gap has been used to describe the difference between the actual and potential output of a country, or the difference between the war effort of two opposing countries. Applied to financial problems, the gap denotes the excess of government expenditure over government income, which might be christened "the Treasury Gap." Or it is the excess

of civilian demand over civilian supply, which might be called "the Consumption Gap." In the Treasury Gap government expenditure is defined as the total outlay of money by the financial authorities during a given year. Government income comprises revenue, voluntary savings (loans by the people to the government), departmental savings (the Unemployment Insurance Fund, for example) and drafts on domestic capital (e.g., depletion of the government stock reserves). Government income from abroad (foreign currency, lease-lend supplies) is excluded from all calculations, as is generally done because of difficulties of estimation.

The Consumption Gap, or the excess of civilian demand over civilian supply, has developed in England during the past two years as follows: Civilian demand or consumers' purchasing power has grown by 20 per cent, for the war effort has led to a great increase in employment. All unemployed capable of work were absorbed, many retired persons returned to their former posts, many women and young people who were never before "gainfully employed" took the place of those who left for the armed forces or they went to the new jobs in the munitions factories: they all earn more than before. A majority of workers are on overtime and they naturally receive overtime pay. As the cost of living has risen, wages have risen with it. There has been considerable and often successful trade union pressure for higher wages; there has been a great deal of "dilution of labor," that is, unskilled or semi-skilled workers have risen to the ranks of skilled labor; there has been some "bidding away" of labor from one firm to another; and all this has resulted in higher earnings. On the whole money wages have risen 40 per cent, while money profits have gone up by 30 per cent during the first two years of the war. But on the other hand civilian supplies, the amount of consumers' goods available, have been reduced by about 20 per cent so that arms production could expand. This has been achieved by a large-scale transfer of labor, materials, and equipment from civilian to war industries, plus a considerable cut in imports of consumption goods. Thus the excess of purchasing power over available goods has been growing, and has presented an ever more difficult problem to the Treasury, whose task it is to square the two.

How is the gap measured? It can be measured in physical terms, using man power as a basis of measurement. The number of workers required to produce the necessary output of arms plus the number of men needed by the armed forces is calculated. The remaining workers, the number

available to produce consumption goods, are deducted from the number required to produce goods sufficient to satisfy the existing civilian demand, and this gives the gap in terms of man power. It is a stable measure, well suited for comparison, if it were possible to estimate it with some degree of accuracy. Next, the gap may be measured in terms of money. This avoids the degree of arbitrariness which must necessarily be associated with index numbers. Yet it seems that index numbers are the best measure just because of their comparability. The index number might be estimated in terms of prices, as fixed by the price-controlling authority, provided there were certain principles in fixing prices and provided these principles were somehow related to the gap. But as this is not so, we shall have to be satisfied to measure the gap in terms of some prewar price level. The data for civilian demand and supply are obtained from the equation "national income = government expenditure + civilian expenditure." Civilian demand is equal to the national income minus government income, as it must be the amount of purchasing power which the government has left in the hands of the people after taxation and savings contributions. Civilian supplies are equal to the national income minus government expenditure, as civilians will get only that part of the national income which is left after all government needs have been filled. Civilian demand minus civilian supply is equal to government expenditure minus government income. Thus the Consumption Gap is equal to the Treasury Gap. They both show the same excess of purchasing power, which indicates the degree of inflation. But the story of war finance is told more clearly by reference to the Consumption Gap, and it will be called hereafter "the gap."[1]

The ideal way to close the gap is to increase supplies without interfering with arms production, wherever possible. In America something might still be done along this line, particularly if purchasing power were

[1]The concept of the Treasury Gap is useful, because it furnishes the necessary data. These have been given in the British White Paper of last April, prepared by a group of economists attached to the Treasury. Mr. Nicholas Kaldor has converted these money data into terms of 1938 prices in the current (September, 1941) issue of the *Economic Journal*. The following results are based on the above estimates: there was no gap at the end of the first year of the war; there was a gap of £400 million at the end of the second year; there may be a gap of over £650 million at the end of the third year.

deliberately diverted from those commodities which compete with defense and are in inelastic supply to those which do not compete and are in elastic supply. For example, aluminum hardware for domestic use contains material which is difficult and costly to get and which is used entirely for defense production. However, furniture and clothing do not compete with war production and hence an increase rather than a decline in their output could be arranged. This point needs stressing, because there is too much of an inclination to take it for granted that it is not possible to expand the output for any civilian commodities, an attitude which is particularly prevalent among those who fear expansion of capacity, even when it is still perfectly feasible.

The English, however, could not close the gap in the ideal way. Neither did they close it by the easy expedient of doing nothing and letting prices rise, that is, by inflation. They used other means and their efforts fall naturally into two periods. During the first period, from September, 1939, to August, 1940, the gap was closed without resort to inflationary means. This success was not due to what the Chamberlain government liked to call "its wise financial policy"; it was the result of its own inadequate war effort. Government expenditure had risen by August, 1940, only 60 per cent above the low level at the beginning of the war, a rate of increase of about 1 per cent per week! In the first year of the war, the country produced only little more than half of what it could have produced. Civilian demand and supply were reduced from £3,500 million in 1938-39 to £3,150 million in 1939-40. A serious curtailment of civilian supply began only after the fall of France had driven home its necessity. Imports were measurably reduced only after June, 1940. And only then were allocations of raw materials to civilian firms seriously cut down. The result was that civilian supply was reduced by a mere 10 per cent. Civilian demand rose during the same period by more than 10 per cent and the measures adopted to reduce it to the level of available supplies were adequate, but not exciting or new.

Take taxation as an example. Taxes were the most important weapons of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Each time he brought out a new budget (and there were three during the first year of the war), he produced "a few more turns of the old, familiar screw" to quote the London *Times*. There was the income tax, which was raised in stages by 25 per cent; there were the exemption limits, which were always lowered a

little; there were the surtaxes on the wealthy; there were the death duties; there were all the many indirect taxes; and it was very convenient to add a half-penny to six cigarettes, a penny on a pint of beer, three half-pence on a pound of sugar, and a shilling or two on Scotch whiskey. There was one new tax which the Chancellor did discover. This was the Excess Profits Tax, or in short, EPT. It was levied at first at the rate of 60 per cent and later at 100 per cent on all profits made over and above any one of the three years immediately preceding the war, or, if no profit had been made, all earnings above 6 per cent of the capital were taxed away. EPT bore at first rather hard on firms exploiting wasting assets and on immature firms. This mistake was rectified later on. More serious was the fact that by taking away all extra profit, the monetary incentive to economy was destroyed. It was later restored by the promise to repay after the war 20 per cent of the EPT, provided that it be used for reconstruction purposes.

The second weapon which the Chancellor used for draining off excess purchasing power was the voluntary savings campaign. It was a way of asking people to lend to the government any money which they could spare, once they had purchased the immediate necessities of life. A war savings movement was started with the zealous Sir Robert Kindersley at its head. Tremendous efforts were made and large subscriptions were given by all classes of the population. The working classes saved through the purchase of savings certificates and deposits with their trade unions, cooperative societies, penny banks, and post offices. The middle class bought defense bonds and paid more life insurance. The wealthy took most of the big government loans which were issued from time to time. The whole campaign was financed at the rate of 3 per cent, enabling thereby the Treasury to borrow £1,280 million at the same cost as a £1,000 million at 4 per cent. The savings campaign put, however, one bad piece of confusion into people's minds. They believed that all saving was instrumental in closing the gap, whereas the truth is that saving is useful only in so far as it reduces consumption. For a person who merely transfers his cash holdings into government loans consumes just as much as before.

The third method of closing the gap was rationing. This part of war finance has to be headed with the famous "too little and too late." Too little, because far too few articles were rationed. Petrol was rationed in

October, 1939; the first foodstuffs—butter, bacon, and sugar—were not rationed until January, 1940. Meat, cooking fats, margarine, and ham were rationed later still. There were other commodities in short supply, but they were not rationed. Rationing and price fixing (which generally went with it) came too late, because supplies were no longer so large as they might have been (meat, for example), or prices had risen so much that the poor could no longer afford to buy the commodity (it was estimated that only two out of every five persons had the money to buy the bacon ration). This led the London *Economist* to write the bitter words, "The rich are rationed by quantity, while the poor are rationed by price." The reason for this policy of "too little and too late" was that the government wanted "to wait until things become more normal": officials found it difficult to organize rationing. Furthermore, the Ministry of Information had committed itself by its statement that, because Germany had a rationing system, her collapse was impending. Thus it was naturally difficult to introduce rationing.

Price control was a fourth means of avoiding inflation. The preparations which had been made immediately preceding the war were quickly put into effect. Rent control was imposed on all low rents and this first control was also the greatest success of all price control measures, because it was prompt, complete, and well enforced. Some food and raw material prices were controlled, but with less success, because of their piecemeal nature. Retail prices could be controlled on the request of a body of traders. The control consisted in fixing prices at the level prevailing at the outbreak of war; increases were permitted to the extent to which their justification could be proved. Prices rose about 20 per cent during the first year, as measured by the cost-of-living index. That was due to such external factors as the rise in the cost of imports caused by the depreciation in the value of the £ sterling, and the increase in freight and insurance rates; it was due to the rise in the cost of transport, the compulsory 6 per cent stock insurance, and the expenses of air raid precautions. There was remarkably little profiteering. The public objected to it strongly and the government and trade associations threatened it with heavy penalties. EPT took away any gains which might have been made. There was no incentive to raise prices, because the government was successful in draining off all excess purchasing power.

During the second period of the war, from September, 1940, to August, 1941, the first signs of the gap appeared. Uncontrolled prices rose, there was a black market in rationed commodities, there were shortages and queues. Civilian demand stood at £3,200 million and had outrun civilian supply, which was only £2,800 million. This was due in the first place to the great expansion in government expenditure which had risen by 75 per cent over the first year and which was three times larger than at the outbreak of the war. Secondly, civilian supplies were curtailed more severely. Almost all civilian production was reduced to a prewar percentage, generally by reducing the amount of raw materials allocated and sometimes by direct shutting down of plants. One of the first articles falling under the "Order limiting civilian supplies" was the umbrella, perhaps not so much because it was inessential for winning the war, but rather as a symbol marking the break with "business as usual." It drew attention to the problem of war finance: to cut down an expansion of 20 per cent in civilian demand and then reduce it by another 20 per cent, which represented the amount of curtailed civilian supplies.

The government believed that one of the best ways in which it could close the gap would be a much more stringent price control. As only certain commodities were fixed in price and as fears of profiteering receded, many uncontrolled commodities were raised in price on the ground of an "increase of cost due to the war situation." A correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian* has described how an air raid warden's tin helmet, which cost a mere 4½ pence to produce, underwent so many "justified increases" on its long way from the manufacturer to the consumer that its selling price was 17 shillings, 6 pence. This is an exception, but many traders went in for price rises, as the reasons which restrained them at the beginning of the war no longer existed to the same extent. So the government introduced a new Prices of Goods Act by which "justified increases" were prohibited and maximum prices or maximum margins of profit were fixed which could not be exceeded. If a producer made unavoidable losses, he was given a subsidy. This system, which had started in a small way at the beginning of the war, applied mainly to food. By the middle of 1941 the annual rate of subsidy payments was over £100 million. The new Act extended price control to almost all manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers, and it was enforced much more effectively than the first Act.

Backed by this Act, price control attained once more the success which it had at the beginning of the war. In addition it had a restraining influence on the rise of wages. So the government put great hopes in price control as a means of avoiding inflation. "If we keep prices stable, wages will automatically be stable," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But not all prices were kept stable. Prices of domestically produced things like coal and transport were forced up to meet the claims of shareholders and the pressure of trade unions, both based chiefly on their strong bargaining position.

Then in its recent White Paper on "Price Stabilization and Industrial Policy" the government tried to introduce the idea of the stabilization of wages as a remedy against inflation. On the assumption that civilian demand equals supply at the date of commencing this plan, there will be no price rise as long as wages remain constant. But, as is inevitable in war time, civilian supplies are cut more and more with the result that prices rise until real wages are sufficiently reduced to equate again demand and supply, and the rise stops. It is true that there is not the "vicious spiral of inflation." Yet the results of inflation and the stabilization of wages are the same. There is an equal absolute reduction of all real wages, falling most heavily on the lowest incomes.

Finally, it was believed that the remedy against inflation is a control of prices and wages. But even if it were correct to assume that any increase of prices and wages can be prevented, even if civilian demand and supply are equal at the time of introducing this control, a gap is bound to arise and bound to grow in the form of excess purchasing power for the old reason that war demands a continuous reduction of consumption goods. The gap will be shown in shortages and queues, and those make up merely another form of inflation. Scarce commodities will be distributed by the wasteful method of "shopping power" and those with the most time, energy, and patience will get most of the goods. Those who work long hours (the vast majority of them falling in the lower-income classes) will have least time to take part in the scramble. That in itself is a bad thing. Worse still, women will work fewer hours to secure supplies, and men will be less well fed. This in turn will lower the output of goods and widen the gap still more.

For a long time it was believed that shortages could be overcome by rationing. Consequently it was greatly extended, including many food-

stuffs and all clothing. Rationing also became more severe. One person got only one egg per week, one ounce of cheese, and two ounces of butter. The customary roast no longer appeared on the Sunday dinner table of small households. Communal feeding was introduced in order to achieve the economies of bulk-cooking. A few exceptions were made for workers in heavy industries and for children. Rationing has restricted consumption as equitably as possible. But by its very restriction it set free purchasing power which increased the gap by pressing more heavily on rationed goods. Over-all rationing would be the right solution. But it is doubtful whether 700,000 to 800,000 different articles could be rationed at all. It would certainly be a most complicated, wasteful, and annoying business. It would take all freedom of choice from the consumer. And in the end it would achieve only the same result as taxation and saving.

Price control, wage control, and rationing must all be a part of war finance. Yet it has been pointed out with considerable truth that taken by themselves they are no better controls of inflation than "the breaking of a thermometer in an effort to control the temperature." Happily these measures have never been used completely by themselves. Happily the Treasury has always relied on taxation and saving as major weapons for closing the gap. Taxation of income was increased during the second year of war by 25 per cent over the first year. A novel Purchase Tax was levied on wholesale value, 33 1-3 per cent on luxuries, and 16 2-3 per cent on necessities like shoes and clothes. Voluntary savings increased greatly during the second year as a result of the splendid campaign of the National Savings Movement. It achieved totals which rose to new heights week after week, but relatively speaking the voluntary effort was insufficient. To close the gap everybody would have had to save every increase in his income and something in addition. It would have meant too much. As Mrs. Joan Robinson of Cambridge has put it so well: "We may be a nation of 40 million Churchills, but we may need to be a nation of 40 million archangels to save at such a rate without compulsion."

To avoid generally increased burdens certain Labor Party members proposed "to make the rich pay for the war." The contribution which the rich could make to close the gap was to reduce their consumption. To take away their wealth would not have reduced their consumption except to the small extent to which they now finance their current expenditure from wealth. To take away all their incomes above £250 (the level

of the lower middle class) would not have reduced consumption sufficiently to close the gap. Hence there was no other solution than to tax the incomes of the working-classes, a solution which was so unpopular that it could not be introduced. That is why Mr. Keynes proposed the scheme of "deferred pay." He demonstrated that the poor man must be taxed to the extent to which the wealthy could not be made to pay. If taxation should be rejected, inflation would reduce consumption of the poor much more. In addition taxation could be so arranged that the money paid now would be returned after the war. Thus a married man with one child, earning £220 a year would pay a little over £3 in income-tax and have the whole sum paid back to him after the war. The scheme is not limited to the poor, and a man with wife and one child earning £1,000 a year would pay £328 income-tax, of which £24 would be returned to him. While this part of the scheme was adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his last (April, 1941) budget, the additions which Mr. Keynes suggested have not yet been introduced. His most important proposal is the payment of family allowances to the poor. A certain sum is to be paid each week for every child of a low-income earner so as to prevent a reduction of his standard of living below the level of subsistence. The Keynes Plan has many and great advantages. It closes the gap, it lays a foundation for the property of the poor man, and it opens up the possibility of using the savings so created to combat postwar depressions. It is easy to understand and very thorough. But there is one point on which it may fail. There is the danger that those who do not want to consume as much as before and can afford to do so, will remit their taxes and deferred pay out of their capital. They may sell their real estate and their stocks and shares, they may withdraw their bank and savings deposits in order to meet the claims of the Treasury. They might be prevented from doing so, if their accounts and sales were blocked. But that is difficult to accomplish successfully. Moreover, it cannot prevent the use of cash holdings and the sale of personal valuables such as diamonds.

The only way of closing the gap without inflationary measures and without any offsets such as the Keynes Plan may represent, is a scheme of rationing expenditure on the purchase of goods sold in retail shops. This proposal was made by Mr. Michal Kalecki of Oxford some months ago. Many commodities are already rationed. Rationing of expenditure is

to cover those not hitherto included, the most important being drink and tobacco, and all retail articles. Rent, services, books, and medicines are not included. A flat-rate issue of coupons is made similar to the methods adopted for rationing of individual commodities. The most fundamental problem is to prevent a "black market" trading in coupons. If everybody gets the same value in coupons, there will be many whose incomes are too low to enable them to use all their coupons. Thus these people may wish to sell the remainder to the well-to-do (they are doing it already with the clothing coupons) in exchange for ordinary currency either to purchase unrationed articles or to make full use of their retail coupons at a later time. To prevent such a transfer of coupons it was first suggested that it be made illegal, but that is only a pious hope. It was then suggested to issue to poor persons only 80 per cent of the value of the coupons. But that would not be accepted on grounds of equity. Mr. Kalecki has, however, hit on an ingenious means of overcoming this difficulty. Half of the unused coupons could be sold to the government and the money obtained thereby could be made to purchase rationed goods with the remaining half. The second problem is to insure that no goods are sold without coupons. Kalecki proposes to set up a "Retailers' Controlling Office" to which retailers would surrender coupons which they received from consumers. The total value of the coupons would have to be equal to the value of the goods purchased by the retailers from the wholesalers plus the mark-up plus the value of any goods sold from stock. The great advantage of the Kalecki Plan is that it would limit civilian demand to the goods available and no more could be consumed by drawing on wealth. It would leave it to taxation, savings, and deferred pay to "mop up" the excess of purchasing power. It would halt the rising trend of prices; it has even been suggested that it might reverse it, because retailers would have to compete for their customers. Finally, it would preserve freedom of choice, because any article and any amount could be purchased within the limits of the expenditure permitted.

The next step will be a further cut in the standard of living of the people, who will then be a third less well off than at the beginning of the year. Military output will be increased still more. If these truly great sacrifices shall not have been made in vain, if freedom of choice, the symbol of economic liberty, is to be preserved, a greater emphasis on deferred payments and the introduction of rationed expenditure seem to be the only means to avoid the curse of inflation.

THE DECLINE OF LITERARY MARXISM

By CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG

TIME LENDS the necessary perspective for viewing a movement objectively. Looking back upon the past decade, we can see clearly the mistakes that were made, the excesses that were committed. The period from 1930 to 1940 was definitely Marxist in complexion. Despite strong but unorganized opposition, the left-wing movement in literature carried practically everything before it. In a time of postwar reconstruction and severe economic dislocation, the confident attack and positive views of the Marxist radicals gained many converts. Especially in the field of literary criticism was Marxism an earnest of originality, the torch-bearer of truth, the inheritor of the future. Marxist writers were not slow in cashing in on their ideological opportunity. They and they alone were animated by lofty, humanistic ideals, by a comprehensive and dynamic philosophy of society which could explain every phenomenon, individual or collective, while predicting the inevitable course of history in the future. Before such powerful forces, the intellectual could put up but a scattered and ineffectual defense. Here was a great hope for mankind in the making; here was the promise of a better world. With the establishment of a collectivistic society would come not only the redemption of the proletariat but also the creation of a truly humane world culture.

"Proletarian" literature was born in the United States and in England. Learned essays were published on the dialectical qualities which distinguished, or should distinguish, proletarian drama, proletarian fiction, proletarian poetry, proletarian criticism. The emphasis, invariably, was on the militant adjective "proletarian," the symbol of salvation. Marxist critics were adept at the art of controversy; they waxed fat and strong on the incessant war of words. Authors who in their innocence strayed away from the official canons of orthodoxy, whatever these happened to be at the time, were warned about their heresies and dereliction by the watchdogs of the radical press.

In 1935, by giving its seal of approval to the policy of the United Front, the Communist International launched a movement which was bound to influence the development of culture in other countries. Liberals and workers with progressive views were now to be encouraged to join the new labor party, the object of which would be to fight the menace of fascism. That became the new battle cry, the crusading cause: Fight fascism! Even bourgeois democracy, the Comintern decided, was better than fascism, and every effort should therefore be made to preserve it. For strategic reasons, the theme of world revolution was postponed to a more expedient future.

In a mood of exaltation, liberal writers affiliated themselves with the Communist-inspired United Front. They had no conception then that they were to be used as instruments, that when the proper time came they would be unceremoniously discarded. The Communists had not abandoned and had no intention of abandoning their revolutionary program; if they spent precious time and energy honeymooning with bourgeois writers and intellectuals, it was because they needed all the support they could get at this juncture, and "culture" possessed strong propaganda value. The prestige of established writers could be utilized to support causes and advance ideas which might otherwise not receive a favorable hearing. Hence the liberal writers were valuable allies in the important task of educating and converting the masses. It was all conceived and planned as a vast propaganda campaign.

This is not to deny that many of the battles fought by left-wing critics were salutary and liberating nor to disparage the quality of some of the work they accomplished. They routed the forces of reaction. They made necessary a searching revision of aesthetics on psychological, sociological, and political grounds, and the results in criticism were highly fruitful. The myth of individualism was punctured; the social roots of the creative process were investigated and analyzed; the organic dependence of the artist on his social environment was demonstrated. Consequently many writers took courage and explored new areas of material, new depths of consciousness, new worlds of experience. They created new forms.

But the more militant among the "official" left-wing critics were far from satisfied with this consummation. They were not interested primarily in fostering a revolutionary literature but in revolutionizing society, and literature was important only in so far as it could promote that

end. Culture possessed propaganda value that should be exploited to the full, but this value was ancillary to the more fundamental and difficult task of organizational work, agitation, politics, direct action, the enlightenment of the workers. Hence it was essential that literature should not only escape the blight of individualism but that it should also produce "practical" results. It should change the minds of men, it should point out the way, it should stir them to take positive action. In order to accomplish that, literature must hew to the party line.

In his brilliant polemic, *Artists in Uniform,* Max Eastman angrily and eloquently exposed the degree to which authors, native and foreign, were subservient to party dictates. At first this subservience created no untoward difficulties. In a holy war against fascism, personal sacrifices were more than justified. Besides, many of the writers were pathetically eager for political guidance and even dictation. They were too well aware of their own deficiencies: their limitations of knowledge, their confusion of purpose, their lack of clear-cut convictions. They were willing to follow wherever the embattled genius of the proletariat—which meant in practice the leaders of the party—led them. Unfortunately for their political innocence, there was no consistency in the party line, and they were hard put to it to tack and veer with the shifting winds of Comintern doctrine. What was orthodox one day turned out the next to be a vicious "bourgeois" heresy. Writers discovered that they could be banished from "proletarian" favor if they indulged in latitudinarian views. Unregenerate "individualists" at heart, a few writers would not conform, would not surrender what they were pleased to call their inalienable "right"; they refused to subordinate their art to the Spartan and expedient demands of politics. It was no easy task to keep writers within the party corral. Some of them insisted on asking too many disturbing questions. They made politically unwise or undesirable statements, and when called to account they seceded.

Then the full force of party irony and ire would be turned upon them. For the benefit of the faithful, they were portrayed as weak-kneed renegades, *bourgeoisie* who under stress reverted to type, men who were never particularly trustworthy in a political sense. Their sincerity was impugned, their character smeared, their talent held in question.

Despite this campaign of character assassination, the list of deserters continued to grow. It needed but the confirmation of Soviet Russia's trade

alliance with Germany in 1939 to disillusion many others who had held on through thick and thin. They could no longer blind themselves to the truth. Many, in their desire to sacrifice themselves for something greater than the self, had ascetically obeyed all party orders. Their individual needs and aspirations were swallowed up in a higher cause. What did fame or literature matter so long as society was kept on its destined course?

But the fate of the individual does matter supremely, especially if his vocation is that of a writer. He cannot quiet his daimon or slay his talent. The task of the writer is to create; that is his mission in life. And yet writers, in spite of themselves, were led to engage in activities which bore no discernible relation to their professional role. This was justified by the rationalization that the writer can stand apart from the struggle against fascism only at the expense of sterility. By cutting himself off from the people, who are the primary source of inspiration, he commits intellectual and spiritual suicide. "It is indisputably true," declared Earl Browder, "that literature can be created today only by those who are on the side of the people against reaction, fascism and war."[1] This is a magnificently abstract statement. Who are "the people"? What kind of "reaction" does Earl Browder have in mind? As for war, the Communists have no objection to the waging of war whenever it happens to suit their purpose. Such oratorical appeals serve to confuse the writer. How writers were affected by joining the United Front is made clear in part by Joseph Freeman who, in "Toward the Forties," declares:

> Writers have been out of work; they have been on relief and on the WPA; they have gone on strike for their own demands; they have picketed not only in sympathy with workers in other fields but for themselves; they have organized mass demonstrations, been arrested and beaten; they have sent delegations to Washington and negotiated with their employers. Their experience at work, out of work and in their trade unions has been the experience of other American workers. This direct economic experience has sharpened whatever intellectual awareness the writer may have gained about the fundamental problems of modern life. It has helped to teach him that art cannot be free while society is enslaved.[2]

Only a few dared to ask at the time: What has all this to do with literature and the literary function?

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[1]American Writers' Congress, *The Writer in a Changing World* (New York, 1937), p. 48.

[2]*Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

Convinced of the truth of Marxism and the soundness of party policies, the Communist writer willingly accepts discipline. Obedience is organic because it springs from inner assent, complete faith. But the fellow traveler is in an anomalous position. How shall he choose between truth as he sees it and truth as the party critics see it? The doctrine had been drilled into him that individualism is a delusion and a snare, that the cult of genius has passed. Therefore for a time the writer tended to distrust his individual impulses and values and rely increasingly on the ex-cathedra pronouncements of the Marxist pundits. But since the Marxist critics themselves followed a shifting policy in conformity with the changing demands of the political situation, their views on art were a study in contradiction.[3]

II

One is justified in suspecting the value of a literary movement which flickers out at the command of political expediency. Not that the writer more than any other man is "free." But as the creative spokesman for a people, he should have some convictions of his own, a body of values that will not be dissipated by the latest wind of political doctrine.

Why, then, did "proletarian" literature suddenly fade out of the picture? Where now is the messianic fervor and fanaticism of the early '30's? As if a button had been pressed in a secret control tower, the productivity of the leading "proletarian" writers stopped. With the liquidation of the United Front, proletarian literature lost its creative vitality. The movement lost its excuse for being with the signing of the trade pact between Germany and Russia, though symptoms of decline could be detected even before that time. Silence fell upon the proletarian poets, the singing crew of the Revolution, particularly those who had embraced an ideology without previously undergoing the organic experience of conversion. In their work, wish-fulfillment and ethico-political imperatives usurped the austere labor of expression. Much of proletarian poetry in America was spoiled by sounding slogans and propagandistic clichés. Their writing was not impregnated with antecedent personal experience; their poetry sprang from a doctrine, not from a profound philosophy of

[3]The story is refreshingly told by Kurt London in *The Seven Soviet Arts* (Yale University Press, 1938).

life. Proletarian poetry is most convincing when it arises out of the daily struggle of living, without the infusion of cerebral complexity or doctrinaire self-consciousness.

A profound exposure of the weaknesses and contradiction inherent in the Marxist system of aesthetics is to be found in an address Waldo Frank gave on "Values of the Revolutionary Writer." It is a stirring appeal, charged with that moral passion which is characteristic of his work. It is therefore all the more significant as a document revealing with luminous clarity the dangerous fallacies involved in too orthodox and literal an application of Marxism to literature. Primarily an artist and not a politician, Waldo Frank insists that the literary work of art is not a direct incitement to action but an autonomous activity. The special function of art is to convey the true experience of the totality of life. Frank denies that direct propaganda can be effective as literature. Even revolutionary writers must not conform to the pressure of immediate ends, must not lose sight of the organic progress of mankind. They must acquire faith in the autonomy of literary art, perceive its place in the evolution of humanity and refuse to surrender their function as artists. Whatever propaganda a work of art contains is implicit in and dependent upon its effectiveness as literary art. Therefore, Waldo Frank concludes, the revolutionary writer, if he is to achieve his aim, must endeavor to see life whole.

English writers, more stable, more deeply rooted in tradition, took considerably less time to make up their minds about this problem of Marxism and its relation to art. Before the clouds of war darkened the world horizon, E. M. Forster, though he had been a valiant fighter against fascism, fulminated against the dogma that the writer must completely surrender his privacy, his periods of creative leisure and solitude. But now that a war of extermination is going on between Germany and England, he has, after examining his conscience, signified his willingness to serve his country in any useful capacity, to place his not inconsiderable talent, be it as a pamphleteer or downright propagandist, at the service of his people. The liberal ideal was brilliantly vindicated by Aldous Huxley who, in *Ends and Means,* gave a searching analysis of the Communist position; against it he upheld the thesis that the end did not justify the means.

The worm had begun to turn. Edmund Wilson, an influential American critic, returned from a visit to the Soviet Union with an un-

flattering account of the bureaucratic repression he found there—the oppressive atmosphere of fear, the idolatry of Stalin. His experiences there made him look once more to democratic institutions as providing hope for the future. Then, in order to sweat the Marxist influence out of his system, he set himself the ambitious task of tracing the development of Marxist thought. He dissected the vulgar interpretation of history which puts the emphasis on a monistic principle, namely, that people always act from motives of economic interest. Such a theory is based upon a mechanistic conception of consciousness. The will of individuals plays its part in the determination of the historical process. And this will is affected by passion, by deliberation. Hence Wilson concludes that the Dialectic is a religious myth which has been stripped of its divine appurtenances and applied to the evolving history of mankind. Karl Marx may admit that it is men who are responsible for the direction that history actually takes, but in practice "he keeps talking as if the proletariat were the chosen instrument of a Dialectic, as if its victory were predetermined," and thus he assumes "an extra-human power."[4] And his followers by carrying this theory over into practice, have made fatal blunders, assuming that socialism was in any event inevitable; they have thus "acquiesced in the despotism of Stalin while he was uprooting Russian Marxism itself."[5]

Though English writers were on the whole less severely affected by the rabies of Marxism, a number of embattled Marxist intellectuals did start a literary movement, the object of which was to create and also to lay the ideological foundation for "proletarian" writing. In fact, perhaps the most ambitious Marxist contribution in the field of literary criticism is by an Englishman, Christopher Caudwell, whose *Illusion and Reality* marks a valiant effort to judge all literature and particularly poetry in the light of historical materialism. Marxists have long maintained, though it is hard to see on what valid grounds, that dialectical materialism provides an open sesame to the understanding not only of economics and politics but also of science and literature and art. What Caudwell adds that is new is an attempt to synthesize modern scientific knowledge in the realm of physics, psychology, and anthropology and integrate it with the basic Marxist conceptions. It is truly an amazing book. For the intellectuals

[4]Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station* (New York, 1940), p. 195.

[5]*Ibid.*, p. 196.

it constitutes a challenge of the first order. It provides not only a foundation for a new system of aesthetics which is a fusion of Marxism, Freudianism, modern science, anthropology, and symbolic logic; it also furnishes, or purports to furnish, a consistent and complete philosophy of the universe and of man.

The concluding chapter, "The Future of Poetry," reveals the limitations of Caudwell's extraordinary method. Bourgeois culture, he assures us, is on its last legs; it has reached its final, convulsive crisis, and the new society is emerging from the womb of the old. The proletariat, dependent and economically enslaved, can achieve freedom only by destroying the *bourgeoisie*. This class, the proletariat, is not merely the most long-suffering class of modern capitalistic society; it is the class destined to heal the wounds and cure the ills of an internally lacerated civilization. In the final struggle it will assume the leadership, play a creative role. Without understanding the deepening revolutionary crisis and taking into account the role of the proletariat in the building of society in the future, modern art, we are told, cannot be adequately comprehended. For proletarian art

> expresses the movement of the proletarian class itself, and this movement is to annihilate its existence as a class by becoming coincident with society as a whole. It was the rôle of class society to gather at one pole all consciousness and art—how then could proletarian art exist, before proletarian society has developed its own distinctive consciousness? And this could only happen in any full measure when proletarian freedom had exceeded bourgeois freedom—for consciousness is the reflection in ideology of the social product which secures its existence. Art also is a social product.[6]

If the reader is unable to make head or tail of this farrago of Marxist abstractions, let him not be discouraged. There was a time when earnest intellectuals grappled with these dialectical formulations in the belief that they contained, even if they concealed, a profound truth, a core of precious and redemptive meaning. That belief is now badly shattered. These statements about art as a productive problem, about proletarian consciousness and bourgeois consciousness, proletarian freedom and bourgeois freedom, do not make sense. They are symbols which are arranged in the proper syntactical order, but they have no referent in reality; they are meaningless ejaculations.

[6]Christopher Caudwell, *Illusion and Reality* (London, 1937), p. 316.

III

The relation of literature to politics resolves itself on analysis into the relation of the writer to politics. The argument is twofold: If as a man the writer is blind to the decisive issues of his age, the fate of the social order, he falls into insincerity, he becomes a divided being, and his work is bound to be false, shallow, sterile. Second, a free, harmonious art cannot develop in a society that is based on class distinctions. Therefore the writer must lend his aid, his talent, to the revolutionary cause. There is a fallacy lurking in this argument which deceives many people. It consists in making Communism a universal philosophy valid for all types of experience, all forms of expression. Culture as well as industry is interpreted as a function of the socio-economic order. That is, of course, simply not so. There is society and there is the universe, and man endeavors to adjust himself in his own way to each of these forces as well as to a multiplicity of interacting cultural institutions. Man creates religion, he establishes a Church, he worships the Virgin, indulges in mysticism and metaphysics, glorifies the sentiment of love, thus investing the instinct of sex with a lofty meaning and sacred dignity it does not possess in a state of nature. He feels and behaves at times in a manner highly irrational; he burns witches and makes pilgrimages; he cries out in terror at the thought of death; he acquires neuroses; he dreams heroic and absurd dreams, but he persists in dreaming; he commits suicide, sometimes for unaccountable reasons; he experiences the oppressive sense of boredom and an inexplicable nostalgia for the Absolute. To explain all this dialectically, in the mass, as the product of property relations or the level of production or the expression of "bourgeois consciousness" is a mechanical vulgarization of the complexity of human nature and the intricate pattern of history and life.

It took the intellectuals considerable time to recover from their infatuation with Marxist dogma. Some have still not recovered and are still babbling about dialectics. The greater part have regained their sanity and their creative independence. As W. H. Auden expresses it in *The Double Man*:

> We hoped; we waited for the day
> The State would wither clean away,
> Expecting the Millenium
> That theory promised us would come,
> It didn't.

In thus cutting themselves off from Communism, the writers are not acting illogically; they are not betraying "the cause"; they are not, to quote Auden once more, repenting of their last infraction by seeking "atonement in reaction." It is precisely against the absolutism of orthodoxy that their protest is directed. Expediency is not their God. Their ill-starred adventure in political engineering has taught them that there is no one road; no single political party has a monopoly of the truth. They desire as much as ever to see a rational society established, but they are no longer so certain that this can be achieved by a revolutionary seizure of power on the economic front. They perceive at long last the value of democratic institutions, they are jealously determined to retain their civil rights. If they show so much concern for the autonomy of art, it is not because they are covertly defending their "class" interests but because art is an essential expression of man and no society of the future can be complete without it.

The persistent defection of men of good will from the ranks of Communism is a portent that no dialectical rationalization can satisfactorily explain. To argue that thought is a function of the economic organization of society is to make a generalization that has little meaning or relevancy when applied concretely. It is a method of reasoning that betrays the intellectual because it denies the validity of his efforts at reaching truth. Thought does not originate and move in a vacuum but neither can it be considered a simple economic reflex. The thinker may unconsciously be conditioned by his environment and his class interests, but these influences alone will not account for the ideas he adopts.

For example, *Poetry and Anarchism,* by Herbert Read, is a declaration of independence of profound import. And the declaration gains in significance by virtue of the fact that it is primarily a confession of faith. Sincerity is hard to define and even more difficult to measure, but it is an essential quality both in literature and politics. If political activities require a disintegration of the personality, a sacrifice of the moral principles which make up the unity that we recognize as character, then, concludes Herbert Read, the sacrifice is not worth making. The end does not justify the means. Motives are as important as results because they help to determine the results.

Herbert Read is seriously concerned about the fate of poetry. If the arts have suffered both in Russia and Germany, it is because the spirit of

freedom has there been stifled. Capitalism, fascism, and Marxism have this in common: they all tend to militate against the values of poetry. The damage done by both the fascist and the Marxist rulers is that they deliberately use the poet for overt political ends. Art, however, is a fundamental need of man, particularly today when it serves to compensate for the abstractions of the intellect. The poet cannot, without renouncing his peculiar function, subscribe to an externally formulated policy or version of reality. Art as a discipline is not amenable to the control of the Dialectic.

The experiences of the past decade have been a valuable lesson for the intellectuals who hoped by violent and conspiratorial methods to hasten the inevitable birth of a collectivistic society. Their taste of official Communism, their disillusionment with party tactics and the spirit of opportunism and expediency that animated the political leaders, their recoil from the compulsive dogmas of Marxism and the doctrine of class hatred, their refusal to conform unconditionally to all bureaucratic decisions—all this made it clear that the intellectual would have to go his way alone and make his contribution to humanity on his own account and in his own way. The outbreak of the second World War, the initial success of the Nazi armies, the rapid spread of the Nazi ideology of brutal force and unconscionable hate, these opened the eyes and hastened the disenchantment of a number of fire-breathing Communists in England. For example, in his *A Faith to Fight For,* John Strachey exalts the virtues of love and faith and opposes them to the Nazi doctrine of hate and force. In short, the writer cannot place allegiance to party above allegiance to humanity. Imaginative truth supersedes political loyalty.

THE WHITE-COLLAR MAN'S BURDEN

By FREEMAN CHAMPNEY

"Rabbit's clever," said Pooh thoughtfully.
"Yes," said Piglet, "Rabbit's clever."
"And he has Brain."
"Yes," said Piglet, "Rabbit has Brain."
There was a long silence.
"I suppose," said Pooh, "that that's why he never understands anything."

—A. A. MILNE

ONE OF THE MORE PERSISTENT and symptomatic cultural trends since the first World War has been a distrust of and growing hostility toward the intellectual. Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy have either liquidated their intellectuals or subjected them to a complete and definitive process of housebreaking. Soviet Russia has purged its Old Bolsheviks. Opposition to the Roosevelt Administration here at home has made effective derogatory use of the "Brain Trust" type of label. And these overt hostilities have usually been accompanied by a glorification of the simple virtues, manual toil, and uncomplicated virility.

All of this is familiar enough and might be dismissed as part and parcel of the wave of totalitarian reaction except for the significant fact that the intellectuals themselves are almost universally afflicted with a deep self-distrust and a mania for group self-destruction.

The American intellectual, as a type, is largely devoid of enduring roots and stabilities in his country, among his fellow men, and within himself. In terms of geography and family, he is the restless son who went off to the big city and who "can't go home again." In terms of the social and cultural fabric of national life, he is the nonconformist, the critic, the dissenter, sometimes the crank or screwball. In terms of his personal life, he is a creature of unstable integration and violent but impermanent commitments, with special occupational infirmities resulting from getting on and off bandwagons and playing crack the whip at the uncomfortable

end of a party line. He lacks the securities and the organic bonds which he found it necessary to forsake and to break through in order to fulfill his destiny of becoming an intellectual. Lacking enduring social ties, he also lacks abiding stabilities within himself. But the point is that, having made himself what he is, he is profoundly dissatisfied, and his visions of a different and better society uniformly involve the elimination or radical alteration of his own kind.

A substantial part of the attraction which a socialist society has had for the intellectual is its promise of universal brotherhood (which he rejects violently in the only forms now available to him) and its dignifying of honest toil (which he isn't much good at but would like to try if things were different). Similarly, those intellectuals who have found fascist theory to their taste are lured at least partly by the idea that life under fascism would mean unity, discipline, and an energizing of will, and put an end to doubts, confusions, and brain fag.

Most of our American intellectuals are now in a positive phase. The negative phase occurred in the '20's, when, almost to a man, they united in assailing the prevailing pattern of American life. It is no longer fashionable or particularly pertinent to be negative about America, and the intellectuals are now busily selecting baskets to house their spiritual eggs. But the people and the qualities in which they put their hopes are precisely those which they are not and do not notably possess.

The significant thing about all of this is not that it discredits the intellectual as a type, but that it sheds important light on some of the things that are awry in American life as a whole. The intellectual, being highly sensitive and articulate, is a useful barometer of national health. Furthermore, while the intellectual utopias doubtless involve a considerable element of personal projection, they also reflect the weaknesses of the society which has produced the intellectuals. Consequently, the suicide mania among intellectuals may be symptomatic of far-reaching maladjustments between people and their environment.

II

Prime assumptions of this paper are that personality tends to function as a unified whole; and that the human animal has basic needs, none of which are purely human or purely animal. Behavior which does not involve the whole personality is bad business for the individual and for

society. Likewise, the thwarting of the basic human-animal needs produces tensions which may ultimately lead to blind, violent, and destructive attempts to restore balance.

Human personality, moreover, has functional roots. Such things as resourcefulness, integrity, courage, and decency are the qualitative accompaniments of acts performed. They are not innate characteristics and they are not suddenly called into existence by exhortation. The same thing may be said of their active opposites.

The reason for insisting on these rather platitudinous generalizations is that large areas of modern life operate in flat-footed defiance of them. As individuals and as a people we cannot expect to possess strengths and virtues needed in times of crisis if the conditions of our daily living too persistently subvert and destroy such qualities. This environmental subversiveness takes two general and interrelated forms: life is forced into artificial compartmentalizations and uncoordinated segments, and the kinds of behavior which develop positive personality traits—the functional roots—are less and less a normal part of everyone's experience.

The thing we are getting at is, of course, the effect on human personality of industrialization and all that goes with it. Patterns of behavior as old as recorded history have been totally disrupted. The important changes are not the simple ones of degree and means which are usually called upon to symbolize Progress. Both the gypsy on horseback and the airline passenger go from one place to another and supposedly each has good and sufficient reason for doing so. Likewise, both the peasant woman beating garments in the river and the American housewife setting the controls of her deluxe washer are achieving the goal of clean raiment by the best means available. There have been enormous economies of time and human energy achieved in such fields but the pattern of intelligent employment of instrumentalities to meet a human need is the same.

If, however, we compare the activity of any self-supporting member of ancient or feudal civilization with an assembly-line worker, a comptometer operator, or an advertising copywriter we see differences of a more drastic sort. People still work so that they may eat, but the premachine peasant, wheelwright, miller, tanner, or cordwainer created a complete and tangible product in a way that used his whole personality, required skill, and made sense. The modern production or white-collar worker uses a very limited set of nerves and muscles and he keeps on

using them day in and day out. The end-product of his labors, moreover, fits into a larger productive pattern in so insignificant a way as to attenuate any vestigial pride of workmanship. Any industrial engineer or office manager knows the importance of eliminating "the human element."

In the field of social relationships, the pertinent comparison is not that of the dial telephone with the farmer's wife high-tailing it across the back pasture to carry the news to the neighbors, but between the farm town on Saturday night and the collective isolation of the metropolitan apartment house. Or between a barn-raising and a cocktail party.

We could make other comparisons. We could consider the expense and the higher learning which are necessary before one of our more progressive schools can partially and clumsily duplicate the educational environment which used to confront a farm boy who had chores to do. We could discuss the breakup of the family, the decline of religion, the substitution of the spectator-pattern for direct participation in recreation, and the standardization of culture in terms of mass markets and sponsors.

We are all sufficiently familiar with these manifestations, however. The important fact is that human personality is being warped beyond the danger point by its environment. The result is that too many people live in a state of dull desperation and aimless irritability and are quite prepared to welcome dictatorship and war as a relief from problems beyond their power to solve and as a release of energies gone vicious from confinement.

We introduced this paper by referring to the intellectuals because they are perhaps the ultimate end-product of our period of civilization. They show in bold relief the effects of compartmentalized overspecialization and urban living. And they would gladly see radical alterations in the civilization which produced them. This suggests not only that our setup needs changes, but that a better setup would have fewer intellectuals.

This is not to say that the job of social criticism, interpretation, and evaluation is unimportant, but that it should be the resultant of the life experiences of many men of differing backgrounds and occupations. It should derive from the common substance of life rather than maintain a precarious fungoid existence at the peripheral points of greatest decay. Too much of our contemporary intellectualism is carried on by and for the intellectuals themselves. By the constant formation and destruction of cliques and oppositions and splinter groups—in an atmosphere of manifestoes, high voltage ultimates, and last ditch stands—the intellectuals give

the impression of being constantly at grips with the essence of things and eternally on the verge of winning the really decisive battle for something or other. A year later, however, the lines will have shifted, the rallying cries will have taken on new phraseology, and only the frenetic tensions will be the same. Such activity, despite its heady intoxication and its militance, never acquires more than an oblique causal relationship to the direction of events. It is important chiefly as a symptom.

The intellectual doesn't often participate in the monotonous, mechanical, and impersonal jobs which are characteristic of modern industry and business. But he does something very similar when he builds his life around the ability of his brain to maintain quantity production of verbalisms. He strains a single aspect of his personality into performing prodigiously. The result is apt to be bad for him personally, and bad for the relevance and soundness of his work.

The job of giving form and human significance to the raw material of living—by art or by criticism or by craftsmanship, or by the rearing of a family or the social integration of a community—is a universal necessity. Everyone makes his own answer to it: greatly or meanly, positively or negatively. To delegate it to specialists and put it outside the confines of the ordinary man's life has never been an adequate answer. The great creative individuals have been products of generations of cultural integration rather than solitary and rootless vertical growths.

America encountered the impact of the Industrial Revolution while the country was still groping for meaning and form in its living. As a result, the anarchic and dehumanizing effects of industrialism overran American life without encountering much of the opposition which more mature culture patterns offered in other countries. This situation gave rise to the glib generalization that America has gone from barbarism to decadence without experiencing civilization. It may equally well be, however, that here in America the process of humanizing industrialism will be accelerated and simplified by the very fact that the terms of the equation are less complicatd by irrelevant cultural heritages.

But it is this very revealed starkness of the human inadequacy of modern life which has given rise to the intellectual as a type. He exists as an articulate protest against the unhealthy effects of modern rootlessness and compartmentalization. In achieving his articulateness and his awareness, however, he has given himself to the same currents and forces which are

basic to his unrest. He has become more rootless and more compartmentalized than the average inarticulate citizen. This gives undeniable edge and urgency to his social diagnoses but it raises serious question as to the reliability of his prescriptions. Machine civilization has had a devastating effect on the wholeness of life. The intellectual has been driven farther from wholeness than most and all of his work is built over the uneasy realization that his special characteristics will be out of tune with the more healthy world he is agitating for.

The thing we are discussing goes considerably beyond the intellectual-aesthetic outcry against The Machine which was fashionable in the '20's. Those who raised it were aware of some of the devitalizing effects of industrialism on the individual soul. But they were primarily concerned with enlarging their personal freedom and opportunities for "self expression." What they had to express was usually a revolt against the pre-machine culture and folkways from which they were fleeing. They wanted no part of the stabilities and normative disciplines of this pre-machine America. As it turned out, the machine civilization which they regarded with such distaste was destroying the older cultural patterns much more effectively than their satires. And it was some time later that the phase of nostalgia for lost securities set in and it was realized that social roots and normative disciplines are essential elements of life.

III

The quality of contemptuous anti-intellectualism which has accompanied the drive to power of European and American fascists is worth thinking about. We had our clearest preview of it here in Huey Long. The Nazis have made it a national creed—("When I hear the word 'culture' I reach for my revolver"). Our American Communists have a sizeable share of it—it crops out in their hatred for liberals, their unabashed talent for changing yesterday's heresy into today's gospel, and their corruption of language from a means of communication to an arsenal of irrational stimuli.

But it is a mistake, I think, to turn from these manifestations with a shudder, and to regard them as additional proof that Germans are beasts and that extermination is a greater need of the times than understanding. Anti-intellectualism is an untenable and vicious extreme. But its existence

indicates that the situation to which it was a reaction was also an untenable extreme.

The fact is that men live by values and faiths which are not primarily verbal or rational but are rooted in a complexity of emotion, sensory experience, mysticism, and muscular habits. When a man's life is most integrated and human, there is a clear-channel communication between his values and his thoughts. His intelligence is then an instrument for sorting, comparing, anticipating, and interpreting his experience, and for articulating and communicating it. But when his life is compartmentalized, and full of thwarted needs and unresolved tensions, his brain rattles around aimlessly like a gourd full of pebbles. His intellect has gotten out of touch with his deeper personality and is no longer to be trusted.

It is this latter kind of rootless intellectualism which has discredited the rational approach to life and has brought about anti-intellectualism and "blood and soil" fantasies. It is the suggestion of this paper that this situation is one aspect of a wholesale derangement of human life which has arisen out of modern industrialism and is basic to many of our troubles. And that a simple alteration in the slogans and abstract commitments of the intellectual will have no effect upon the real problem.[1]

We have come to believe that an educated person is one who has specialized in verbalisms and abstractions, and our intellectuals have gone on to assume that such a person acquires an authority in matters of opinion and judgment beyond that of the common man. Actually, unrelieved preoccupation with words tends to obscure realities and to bring complex confusions. Competent creative writers have always been aware of the difficulties of getting at the real by means of the symbolic. The semanticists are now elaborately rediscovering this bit of the obvious.

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[1]As a footnote to this argument, it may be suggested that a little-explored source of anti-Semitism may lie in a relatively greater adaptability of the Jews to modern life. Centuries of oppression having given them toughness and flexibility, the Jews have more nearly taken the thwartings of machine culture in their stride. The destruction of wholeness of personality has wrought less havoc with a race which has seldom been permitted such luxuries. The non-Jew, filled with confusion and frustration, has turned his sick despair into hatred of a people who seem better able to "take it" than he.

We can perhaps illustrate the kind of partial insights which are making trouble in our thinking today by examining the battle raging in educational philosophy. Those who insist that a smattering of the classics is a useless training for life on the W.P.A. are as right in their way as those who blame *ad hoc* education and pragmatic liberalism for our lack of moral stamina. Certainly we need education which leads to effective living in the present; it is equally certain that education should concern itself with character and values.

The weakness of the "practical" attitude toward education is that it takes too superficial a view of the factors which make for a successful life. Which is not to imply that honest bread and butter fails to sustain life unless it is frosted with a snobbish "culture." But a philosophy which extends no further than "getting by" according to the prevailing rules of the game is a highly insecure and impractical thing. The pace of social change is quite likely to render obsolescent many of the varieties of artful dodging which today rate an urban livelihood.

On the other side of the battlefield, the attempt to build character by indoctrinating the young with verities and exposing them to great books proceeds on the assumption that character is primarily an intellectual matter. Here, again, is a violation of the wholeness of life with its attendant train of bastard offspring.

Character, as we said earlier, is the qualitative aspect of acts performed. It grows by exercise of the total personality and it has some of its principal roots in the skill and the steadfastness with which a person can use his hands. The academic psychologists may give us little support here, but we offer the suggestion that personal integrity, respect for objective realities, and creative will are intimately bound up with a background of manual work. Other aspects of character are rooted in give-and-take relationships with people—both personal and group relationships.

Progressive schools are aware of these functional roots of personality. Higher education has hitherto been able to ignore them because such formative experiences have been an inescapable part of the normal process of growing up. With the urbanizing of larger sections of the population and the mechanization of farming this is less the case than it used to be. A program of revitalized education would have to supply these functional roots—and in more than a piddling and makeshift way. An extension of the Civilian Conservation Corps work to make experience in work

camps a regular feature of public schooling would be a possibility. Such camps could cover the whole range of outdoor manual work, cultural activity, advanced vocational training, and participation in a working democracy.

Such a program would offer a way of constructively occupying the nation's youth during the postwar period of readjustment, and, as a permanent institution, it would go a long way toward filling the vital gaps now existing in the machine age process of growing up.

Proposals such as this will be attacked by the following reasoning: they do this sort of thing in Germany, therefore it is fascism and we want no part of it over here. It is true that fascism has employed such methods of furthering health and social unity. The confusion of people like Anne Morrow Lindbergh arises partly from having seen the positive results in Europe of such programs and concluding falsely that a vital people is necessarily a totalitarian one. Fascism is, in some respects, one possible answer to the debilities of modern life. That it has uniformly directed the energy it has released toward conquest, persecution, and barbarism does not prove that a healthy people will be fascists. It suggests rather that democracies had better not allow the fascist nations to monopolize techniques of revitalizing machine age populations. Nor would they be wise to wait too long.

There are at least two reasons why education should supplement intellectual training with attention to manual skill and social experience. The first is the one discussed above. The second is the urgent need for counteracting the white-collar snobbery which now afflicts the educated and the partly educated. The notion that people of intelligence should keep their hands soft and their linen spotless is not only socially pernicious but it has been responsible for a great deal of individual wretchedness. Many more people train for white-collar jobs than the market will absorb, but this is only part of the mischief. The essential fact is that, as ways of spending one's life, the white-collar occupations are mighty thin soup. In such matters as independence and self-respecting workmanship, steadiness of nerves and naturalness of social reponse, relative freedom from stultifying convention and political supineness, the skilled workman or the farmer has a much more satisfactory life.

We don't need more Bachelors of Arts trained to a bright snobbishness about their social roots and a cynicism about human values. We could

get by with fewer Doctors of Philosophy dedicated to academic careerism, and many fewer business school graduates conditioned to an eager aping of the stupidities of fourth-rate tycoonery. We could profitably trade assorted carload lots of these for men and women whose education had prepared them for living fully at any level of the social strata.

IV

The imminence of war has done what the human waste and suffering of the depression years failed to do—it has broken loose the rigidities of economic and social institutions and unloosed great stores of pent-up energy. Things are on the move and, while the process is largely blind and nonrational, it may be taken as certain that the next phase of relative equilibrium will be vastly different from the last. Much more is under way than the arming of a nation and the winning of a war. The state of momentum which the defense effort is producing will not be circumscribed in its effects nor easily controlled in its directions.

Unleashed reaction to a prolonged period of thwarted and humanly inadequate living is not likely to be pretty. We may be in for a considerable spell of domestic chaos. But times of rapid change—even chaotic change—are times when revolutionary programs may make themselves felt. We cannot have too much thinking now about the desirable shape of things to come. Problems of economic, social, and political organization are receiving substantial consideration. But there has been relatively little discussion of this matter of the relation between human personality and its environment.

It is not a question which may be safely neglected. If working on an assembly line or operating a tabulating machine is bad for the person who does it, it will continue to be bad after the economic system has been reformed. Similarly, how to bring about social integration in city life will still be a problem, and education will be waiting for its marching orders. Stated in its broadest terms, the problem is that of the survival of the human animal in a mechanized environment.

It is not an easy problem to deal with. The necessary starting point is an individual conception of the good life, and there is great likelihood of personal moral prejudices being incorporated into the picture. Consequently, many hands are needed in working it out. Organized science will not be very helpful. Entire life patterns are concerned rather than

abstractions or discrete variables, and judgments of human value are central.

In considering a subject as all-embracing as this one, there is considerable danger of losing perspective. One of the commonest pitfalls awaiting social thinkers is the tendency to seize upon some single aspect of human life which is obviously out of whack, to formulate a remedy for it, and then to set up this one particular reform as a universal nostrum. Thus we are variously called upon to accept managed currency, Esperanto, deep breathing, Single Tax, home industry, or a high roughage diet as the one thing needed to end human suffering for all time. This paper is not a means of setting up shop in this type of business. Nothing in it is intended to deny the importance of economic or political forces. It aims merely to draw attention to a state of disequilibrium that is relatively neglected and to suggest some of the directions in which efforts should be made to restore balance.

PERMANENT MINORITIES: A WORLD PROBLEM

By ALBERT VITON

THE MINORITIES which will be considered here do not cause world wars. The great Western powers did not declare a crusade against the unspeakable Turk when hundreds of thousands of Armenians, Assyrians, and other Christian groups were massacred with cold brutality in broad daylight. Nor did the fact that its archives were filled with official reports describing the savage brutality practiced upon Jews in the Third Reich prevent the British government from sending Sir Neville Henderson on a mission of appeasement and friendship. It was not till imperial interests had driven Downing Street to unsheathe the sword against the Nazis that those reports were published to give a moral and humanitarian tinge to the war.

So callous indeed has world conscience become to the sufferings of helpless minorities that their tribulations are rarely so much as mentioned in the press of even the most democratic countries. Who has heard of the fifteen thousand Armenians who abandoned their homes, fields, villages, and almost all their personal belongings to set out on a new odyssey of sorrow as late as the spring of 1939, when democratic France relinquished Alexandretta to Turkey, although charged by the League of Nations with the duty of safeguarding the integrity of Syria. The tragedy of those people, some of them on the move for the third time in less than a quarter of a century, was great; they trekked over hundreds of miles of roadless hills and valleys, and set sail in unseaworthy boats to avoid living under the hated Turks; yet not a single power protested to the Turkish authorities or, more appropriately, to Paris, against the new tribulations inflicted on that much suffering people.

The fate of eight or ten million people may appear insignificant compared with the major political and economic problems confronting the world. Yet one wonders whether a problem has to cause world wars and affect the fate of great nations before it deserves serious international

attention. Nor should the objective significance of these comparatively small minority groups be underestimated. Although by no stretch of the imagination direct causes of war, it is undeniable that they do complicate international relations at certain periods and, more important still, constitute disturbing if not dangerous elements within the various nations.

A journey on any European continental train before the outbreak of the present war, or a few minutes in the anterooms of consulates in any European capital was sufficient to show the international character of the minorities problem. Every one of the expresses which crisscrossed Europe carried dozens of refugees who were moving from one country to another. It was impossible to mistake them. Their hunted eyes; the restless fear expressed by every move of their bodies; their half-empty suitcases which told a tale of progressive pauperization; their well-worn clothes—all bespoke the endless odyssey in search of a haven of refuge. They crowded the anterooms of every consulate, begging a visa to enable them to rest a year, a month, perhaps only a few days. Soon even visas *ohne aufenthaltsrecht* (without right of sojourn) became difficult to obtain. Armies of spies and special police constables were let loose to track down hapless refugees who had overstayed their limited permits. Every police station, every charitable and travel agency saw daily queues of those people who had nowhere to go and who were wanted nowhere.

Indirectly the minorities complicated international relations and helped create conditions which profoundly affected the development of the war. The situation in Iraq would have been different had there been no Assyrian problem. Much of the Iraqi bitterness against Britain must be traced to the deep—although largely erroneous—conviction that Britain championed the interests of the Assyrian minority. German propagandists made much of Britain's alleged efforts to settle the Christians amidst the Moslem population in order to divide the latter and to rule both. The success of the Nazi fifth-columnist movements in Southeastern Europe in creating divisions and in undermining morale was due to no small extent to their exploitation of local anti-Jewish sentiment.

Rumania offers a good example. The war might have followed a very different course had Rumania been united under King Carol, as it would have been but for the Iron Guard party. The chain of events is long and complicated; suffice it to say here that the Iron Guard, supported finan-

cially and morally by Berlin, was able to divert the country's attention from the basic political and economic problems by means of a concentrated anti-Jewish campaign. From 1937 till the catastrophic events of 1940 which forced Carol to abdicate and opened Rumania to a Nazi invasion, the government's internal and foreign policies were influenced profoundly by the Guardist menace. Carol knew that he did not have a united people behind him in his efforts to keep the Germans out; he knew, on the contrary, that the nation was honeycombed with traitors who would undermine morale from within. A farsighted, pro-Allied policy aiming to construct a Balkan bloc to keep at arm's length the Nazi threat was, under the circumstances, completely impossible. Efforts at suppression having failed, Carol had no choice but to attempt reconciliation and to take the Guard into the government. What happened is a matter of record. Rumania was occupied by German troops; the country became a weak vessel of Berlin; and, holding new strategic positions, the German armies were able to bring irresistible pressure on Bulgaria, which led to the occupation of Yugoslavia, Greece, and the neutralization of Turkey. History might of course have followed the same path had there been no Iron Guard menace; yet I am inclined to believe that the Nazi conquest would not have been realized nearly so easily.

I

The nationless, landless, permanent minorities discussed here differ fundamentally from the standard minorities strewn throughout Europe; and to obtain a clear conception of the essential differences is vitally important. Much of the confusion even—indeed, especially—among men of good will is due to the failure to recognize that the two minority problems are different in almost every essential way. Hence the failure of most liberal solutions.

First, the standard Balkan minorities which have caused so much international friction are settled on the soil; those analyzed here are landless. This distinction is more important than one without protracted personal experience with minority affairs can possibly imagine. A people rooted in the soil has a different outlook on life and the world, has different standards of behavior, establishes different relationship with the surrounding majority group from a minority divorced from the land. Even more important perhaps, long experience has shown that the only way to remove

a land-rooted minority is to massacre its men, women, and children; no measure short of large-scale massacre has ever succeeded in budging a Bulgarian, Polish, or any other land-rooted community. Not nearly so difficult is it to compel a landless minority to pick up the wanderer's staff. It is never, or almost never, so firmly embedded in a particular location, in a particular cultural and mental environment.

The standard Balkan minorities, second, are minorities only in name. They are minorities within the large political framework in which they have been placed; change the framework and in the overwhelming majority of cases they cease being minorities. Such a change might, it is true, create new minorities while solving the first problem; on the other hand, boundary changes are possible which would not create new minority groups. The group which is a minority in, say, the Rumania of 1939 is not a minority, but a majority, within its district, county, or at least village. Not so the landless, permanent minorities. Scattered among nations and peoples, the minority groups analyzed here are majorities nowhere. They do not know the security, the feeling of "belonging" which comes from complete identification with the immediate surrounding community.

The far-reaching significance of this factor cannot be overestimated. It is one thing to live within a community which is temporarily as a result of historical developments placed within a larger political entity; it is a very different thing to belong to a group that is unalterably, permanently separated from the most immediate surrounding community in some manner, real or imaginary. Croatians, to take a concrete example, no doubt suffered from various forms of discrimination, mainly in government employment, when living in the capital of Yugoslavia. How, nevertheless, is one to compare the mental processes of a Croatian with those of a Belgrade Jew laboring under discriminations? Unlike the former, the Belgrade Jew had no Zagreb to retreat to, where, if subjected to mistreatment by Slovak officials, he would enjoy the sympathy and support of the whole community. And the difference is not only one of degree; it is, I must emphasize, one of kind.

Third, minorities differing in some essential way from the majority community, centuries of experience has shown, do not assimilate except in very unusual and not unpredictable circumstances; and religion is one of the most fundamental of all possible differences. This statement will undoubtedly come as a great surprise to the vast majority of readers; we

no longer think of religious differences as very fundamental. Yet the statement is true nonetheless. Moreover, it is frequently more difficult to assimilate a landless, nationless, absolute minority than one which possesses complete communities living on the land—if only because the former is less respected by the majority and its assimilation is less desired. Let me explain.

The West, broadly, has known only one minority of the type discussed here, the Jews. The continued survival of Jews has been the source of endless amazement. So intrigued has the Western mind been by this apparently extraordinary phenomenon that some have resorted to a supernatural explanation; others have evolved fanciful economic, racial, and other theories which really do not explain anything. In reality, the survival of the Jews is neither unique nor is it due to God or devil. Similar minorities dot the Eastern world, where there are dozens of them; and the survival of those minority groups is in many ways far more amazing than the survival of the Jews. Like the latter, they have suffered during their long histories incredible persecutions; like the Jews, again, they usually adopted the language and customs of the majority people; and their numerical strength was usually considerably smaller than that of the Jews. Yet they could be neither exterminated nor completely assimilated.

One might mention in this connection small religious sects like the Sabaeans, the Alewites, and similar small groups; the best examples, however, are the Armenians and the Assyrians. Surrounded by vast Moslem seas, persecuted and massacred, without stable economic existence, offered means of escape from their woes by submission to Islam, these Christian groups nevertheless consistently clung to their religion and preserved their communal character. The price of tenacity, let me emphasize, was at least as great as that paid by the Jews in the Christian world; the rewards of complete religious assimilation were far higher; yet neither persuasion nor force was able to obliterate these communities. The conclusion is inescapable, I believe. Religion is a far more potent force in perpetuating communities than is generally recognized in the West. Racially, as far as the term has any meaning at all, both Christian and Jewish groups of the Near East are in no way different from Moslems; nor are there essential cultural lines of demarcation. Only religion separates these communities, and that alone has been sufficient to perpetuate the various groups.

These factors give a unique character to the problem of the permanent minorities; they mean also that a unique solution will be necessary.

II

Who are these nationless, landless, permanent minorities? Disregarding a number of very small communities strewn through eastern Europe and the Near East, this classification includes the Armenians, Assyrians, and the overwhelming majority of European Jews. The democracies which dominated the last peace conference failed to perceive that these communities constitute a special problem. This ostrich-like attitude will no longer do. Judged from the point of view of the number of people involved, this should be one of the simplest problems confronting the democratic peace makers. But numbers is no adequate yardstick for measuring the gravity of the problem; and the last twenty years should have demonstrated beyond a measure of doubt the urgency of a final and decisive solution.

The Armenians have not known peace in their Diaspora, and they will not know it until settled as a compact, autonomous community. The full tale of their woes during the past three-score years still awaits telling. No single community, not even the Jews, has been subjected to so much persecution during this time. At least a million have perished since 1914, when the Turks began a systematic campaign of extermination. The unfortunates were robbed of all belongings; tens of thousands of families were split (some 132,000 orphans were rescued by relief agencies after the war); hundreds of thousands of women were forced into Turkish harems and into the white slave traffic. Massacres, forced evacuations, homelessness—that has been the history of the Armenians since the '80's of the last century. Many communities put up a noble struggle against the Ottoman murderers; the pluck and courage and determination of all were admirable; but they were invariably confronted with hopeless odds as they fought their way against snipers and bandits, and tens of thousands fell on the hillsides and tracks of Asia Minor. In 1897 the Armenian population of Persia and the Ottoman empire was estimated in the neighborhood of two million. Barely half a million exist today.

The crux of the Armenian problem today concerns about 200,000 souls. About 100,000 are domiciled in Syria, 63,000 in France, and an equal number in Turkey; 25,000 found refuge in Greece, and around 40,000 in other Balkan and Near-Eastern countries. Some of these have struck roots

in their new environments and do not have any intention of once more picking up the wanderer's staff. The vast majority, however, have not succeeded, or have not tried, to acclimatize themselves either mentally or physically. Imbued with an extremely strong national and racial consciousness, most Armenians—especially those settled in Moslem countries—still dream of establishing a national home of their own. They are inordinately proud of their heritage; they point to their courage and religious devotion in keeping alive Christianity in spite of incredible Moslem persecution; and they dream of a new Armenia where they will be free to develop their own cultural, religious, and political institutions.

Not different essentially is the Assyrian problem. The "Assyrian nation" today consists of about 50,000 in Iraq; a similar number in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine; around 30,000 in Soviet Russia and about 10,000 in Iran. In addition there are small communities in Greece, Egypt, France, in South America, and some 20,000 in the United States. These, however, are generally well settled and are not part of the Assyrian problem, although even some immigrants to the United States still dream of a national home of their own.

Like the Armenians, the Assyrians are proud, hardy, industrious, and detest and fear the Moslems amongst whom they are at present forced to live. Claiming descent from the people who built the magnificent Assyrian empire some 4,000 years ago, they glory in their heroic past and dream of a bright future. They have suffered much for their religion. Their bloody feud with the Kurds is of very old standing, and their priests and bishops have had to be more adept in handling rifles than learned in the mysteries of theology. More than a third perished during the first World War, when they fought bravely on the side of the Allies and underwent almost incredible hardship. The retreat of 50-70,000 men, women, and children (with their goats) from their mountain fastnesses in Hakkiari, Turkey, to Hamadan, where a British garrison was encamped, is one of the uncelebrated epics of that war. Their postwar history and the story of the frightful massacre of 1933 have been told too often by competent British officers to need recapitulation here.

From the point of view of numbers, the problem of the Assyrians and Armenians is not gigantic; less than half a million souls are involved. Yet for twenty years the great Christian powers of the West refused to come to grips with the problem. Agencies of the League of Nations ren-

dered invaluable philanthropic aid; France, Britain, and the United States contributed considerable sums of money to mitigate their hardships. (A large part of the expenditure of the eighty-nine million dollars of the American Near East Relief was spent among Armenians, while the Lord Mayor's Armenian Fund in London produced a grand total of one and a half million dollars between 1915 and 1937.) But not money was wanted. Money was certainly needed to save these unfortunates from starvation; it was clear, however, that only a territorial solution could give security and freedom to these minorities and bring peace to the Near East.

The problem of the Assyrians and Armenians will be as real at the end of this war as it was in 1919. They have not made their peace with the idea of living amongst Arabs, and they cannot make peace with it. They are neither free nor secure. They are regarded as intruders and unwelcome strangers by the Arab nationalists and religious fanatics; they are discriminated against and generally regarded as inferiors. They deserve a better fate than has been allotted them. They are energetic, intelligent, and sensitive; their past history justifies a large measure of optimism with regard to their future prospects if only they are given a chance for free development. Surrounded on all sides by barbarism and ignorance, they yet managed to keep alive standards of civilization and culture vastly above those of their neighbors during long and dark centuries. They have clung tenaciously to their language and religion; they have preserved considerable bodies of literature which deserve to be better known in the West; above all, they have kept alive a spirit of independence and a dream of ultimate deliverance which has given them the courage and will to survive great suffering.

III

Homes for five to seven million Jews will have to be found at the end of this war. Failure to recognize the gravity of the problem can be explained only by an abysmal ignorance of conditions in Europe or a congenital inability to face reality. The problem will be of smaller dimensions if the democracies emerge victorious; fewer Jews will have to resort to the wanderer's staff, and the immigrants will receive far better treatment than if their retreat is effected from a Nazi-dominated Europe. But it is a fatal error to imagine that the Polish, Rumanian, and German Jews, and those of other Balkan countries, will be able to continue as of yore

even if the democracies win. Anti-Semitism has deep roots in those countries, and those roots will be affected only slightly by the outcome of the war. To see the situation in this light is not pessimism; it is stark realism.

I do not believe for a moment that Jews will be able to live in Germany even if Hitlerism is swept into the limbo of history, except as pariahs on a subhuman level. Nazi propaganda and myths have penetrated too deeply into the minds of the youth, and defeat on the battlefield will not erase them. The physical tortures developed by the Nazis will undoubtedly disappear; economic restrictions will most likely be removed; but many years will have to pass before the psychological heritage of the Nazi regime will evaporate and before Jews will again be treated as ordinary human beings. Those still in the Reich will have to find new homes unless willing to give up all self-respect and subsist as despised untouchables.

If the plight of the two and a half million Jews in Poland has been less before the eyes of the world than that of their co-religionists in Germany, that is to be explained by the peculiar concept of "news" which prevails in newspaper offices, not by objective reality. The sad truth is that the fate of the Jews in Poland has been no better, and in many respects distinctly worse, than that of German Jews. The most important difference is that Polish Jews have never seen better days; persecution, degradation, and denial of the most elementary human rights have been accepted by all as part of the natural order. The Poles have never emerged from medievalism; centuries of oppression have taught the Jews to submit meekly to degradations, insults, and oppressions which would have been completely unbearable to anyone not born in bondage.

One has to be ignorant of history and blind to contemporary reality to hope that the Poles will learn anything from their own bitter experience of Nazi tyranny. On the contrary, even the Polish refugees in Britain openly declare "that after the war Poland will have no place for Jews," and the three semi-official Polish papers published on British soil, led by the *Jestem Polakem,* organ of the Polish National Democrats, are carrying on a brazen anti-Semitic propaganda. A book on "September, 1939," issued by the official Polish publishing house, has even explained Poland's collapse as due "primarily to the sympathy of the Polish Jews for Germany." Liberal promises by General Sikorski and other leaders do not deserve to be taken seriously. Poland will continue to be a hell for Jews and all other minorities even if the democracies emerge victorious.

Conditions have been somewhat better in Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, which have a combined Jewish population of about a million and a half (875,000 in Rumania alone, where they constitute 5.3 per cent of the population). Anti-Semitism has a long history in the first two countries which became highly virile and active during the decade preceeding outbreak of the current war. The fascist Iron Guard, which received Berlin's moral and financial support, prospered on its uncompromising anti-Semitism; the gospel of hate was preached also by other political parties, notably the one led by Goga and Cusa, who performed a fine imitation on Rumanian soil of the antics of Julius Streicher. Outbreaks of violence have not been lacking. Jews have not been beaten on Hungarian university campuses and have not been thrown off moving trains, as has happened in Rumania, and cases of physical assaults have been rare; yet in many ways Hungarian anti-Semitism is far more vicious than its Rumanian counterpart. The haughty Magyar feudal landlords have not felt the need of putting the Jews in their place because, at least as far as they were concerned, the Jews had never risen above their place. Jews never had a look-in at the civil service; the teaching profession has always been closed to them; they were always regarded as second-class citizens. A third of the Jews in these Balkan countries will be able to remain on tolerable, even decent, conditions; but I can see no permanent improvement, certainly no collapse of anti-Semitism, if the whole Jewish population of these countries remains in *status quo ante.*

While anti-Semitism will force Jews to flee from some countries, purely economic factors, although accompanied by little or no anti-Semitism, are producing a Jewish problem in others. Lithuania, which has had practically no anti-Semitism, is a good example. Jews have lived there for many centuries; they are dispersed throughout the villages and they have lived on terms of closest intimacy with their neighbors. A fine *modus vivendi* has been evolved, which consists of mutual respect based on realization of a common humanity separated only by religious differences. The national government has made no distinctions among citizens on the ground of race or religion. Jewish schools have been subsidized by the state on the same terms as all other minority schools; Jewish religious institutions have received financial aid; there has been no discrimination in the administration of justice.

Yet inexorable economic forces are creating a Jewish problem as effectively as vicious anti-Semitism. What is happening is that Jews are ceasing to perform the services which they traditionally rendered and are losing their means of existence. In Lithuania as in all other Baltic countries, Jews have always been middlemen. Some supplied the villages and cities with their manufactured goods; others marketed, mainly abroad, the agricultural products of the countryside. There were a few physicians, lawyers, and other professionals; but those were numerically unimportant. The main function of the Jews was as middlemen; and their services were vitally important for the well-being of the community.

The last fifteen or twenty years, however, have witnessed profound changes in this traditional economic complex. Eager to improve the lot of the peasants, the national government and private individuals began to foster agricultural cooperatives. Some cooperative societies began to supply their members with an increasing array of manufactured goods; others undertook to market at home and abroad agricultural products. Enjoying infinitely greater financial resources than the petty traders, the cooperatives were able to establish modern processing plants and great marketing organizations; they undertook vital educational functions to improve the quality of native products and to raise the social, cultural, and political level of the villagers. And they have been extraordinarily successful. They have done much to improve conditions in the villages, and they have constantly expanded their activities. But it can easily be imagined what they have done to Jews. They have been left hanging in the air, so to speak. Nor have the economic conditions been improved by the emergence of a class of Christian Lithuanian traders. At first the peasants refused to take seriously the Christian traders, many of whom were repatriated from America; gradually the novelty wore off, and they helped to undermine further the economic foundations of the Jews.

Identical forces have been at work in many other countries; and there is not the slightest ground for believing that re-establishment of peace will see the reversal of the process. On the contrary, cooperatives represent a revolutionary step in the economic, cultural, and political progress of agricultural countries; they deserve every encouragement. Nor does industry offer a solution for the economic problem of the Jews. Most of these countries lack important industrial natural resources for development of great industries; in the field of petty, home industries the Jews

are meeting extremely severe competition from Christians who migrate to the cities either voluntarily or by necessity because of the increasing pressure on the land. The last factor also rules out solution of the problem by settling the Jews on the land.

It is impossible to conclude this all too brief survey of the Jewish problem without mention of certain Near-Eastern countries. Iraq, Syria, al-Yemen, Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, and Libya have a combined Jewish population of two millions. That these countries should be mentioned in the present connection may come as a shock to most readers; yet only in Poland and Germany is the situation as serious as in these dark lands. It is not that Jews are physically mistreated, although that too has happened, or that they are not allowed to earn a living; far more significant is the psychological and cultural atmosphere prevailing in Moslem countries, which stunts mental and moral development and degrades members of minority groups, whether Jewish or Christian, to the level of outcasts and slaves. That—slaves—is precisely what Christians and Jews are even to the lowest of the Faithful, according to traditional Islamic theory; or dogs, according to the chant which pilgrims to the grave of Moses sing every year before Easter on their entry into Jerusalem (*Falastin baladeinu, w'al-nasriyin w'al-Yahudin kalbeinu;* Palestine is our country, and Christians and Jews are our dogs.) Members of all minority groups live in an atmosphere of fear and degradation practically unimaginable in the West; and to hope for permanent enlightenment as the result of a democratic victory in the war bespeaks a childlike naiveté. The traditions of Islam are even more immutable than its doctrines: a cultural and pyschological revolution of profound intensity will be necessary before Moslems will admit even theoretical equality between Faithful and nonbelievers.

IV

Theoretically, the existence of racial, religious, or linguistic minority groups should not constitute a problem. The groups considered here have been important progressive forces, and they have contributed more than their numerical share to the development of the countries in which they live. Standing somewhat apart from the general community, they are more restless, more dynamic, more adaptable to new influences. England and Germany owe an inestimable debt to the Huguenot groups which sought refuge in their midst from persecution in France. The Germanic

groups in the north and southeast of Europe brought with them a culture and method of production far above those found among the indigenous communities. The Jews contributed greatly to the progress of southeastern Europe, just as the Christian and Jewish minorities in the Ottoman empire fulfilled an indispensable and wholly progressive role.

Nor is it difficult to blast to smithereens the racial myths used to justify measures directed against minority groups. Not one of the European states is racially homogeneous in any meaningful sense of the term, and certainly not the Balkan and Near-Eastern countries, where the minority problem is most severe. The ideal of religious, racial, and cultural unity so loudly proclaimed in recent years, is a reactionary ideal which runs counter to the best and socially most progressive Western traditions. Many other weighty considerations could be brought against radical changes in the population composition of the countries mentioned. Yet the bitter reality is that the minorities have been a disturbing problem and will continue to be one. Both the minority and majority groups suffer. A minority problem is a social disease which undermines the moral and spiritual health of all concerned. Common interests demand that it be treated in the most effective manner possible.

What is to be done? I believe that only a territorial solution can cope adequately with the problem. Assimilation would of course be an effective solution. But history should make us chary of optimistic hopes in that direction, except under special circumstances. Assimilation is possible only in countries where the majority accepts the minority on a plane of absolute equality; then assimilation becomes almost automatic. In the case of the Jews, assimilation is taking place fairly rapidly in Great Britain and in this country. Unfortunately, the number of places where this process can proceed unhindered is few. The moment social and economic discrimination is introduced, placing both the majority and minority communities on their guard against each other, a counter force begins to operate, setting up insurmountable barriers against complete identification of the two groups with one another.

There are sufficient empty spaces in the world for settling not only the homeless groups discussed in this article, but vastly larger communities which will have to leave Europe and perhaps Asia. The Near East alone could support, if fully developed, thirty to fifty million human beings; at present only about ten millions live in that part of the world.

The ideal solution of the problem of the permanent minorities would be to settle them in the Near East. There are other solutions which could prove equally suitable. Africa, Australia, and South America can hold many times their present populations. The minorities should be settled as compact communities to enable them to develop autonomous political and cultural institutions. Political independence may not be a blessing; it is, however, a necessity for a free social and cultural life. And the fact is that the overwhelming majority of the nationless minorities dream of political and cultural self-determination. They do not want to assimilate and to disappear from the stage of history.

The task of settling these millions of human beings will be a gigantic one, involving the expenditure of billions of dollars. It can be undertaken only on an international basis under the direction of a vastly strengthened League of Nations which the democracies will have to establish if they emerge victorious in the war, as they will. An international apparatus will have to be built to control the resettlement work and financial operations. But the task should not prove beyond the capacities of the triumphant democracies. It can be done, and it needs to be done. Solution of vexatious and persistent minority problems should be made an integral part of the peace which the democracies will write.

DEMOCRACY AS PHILOSOPHY

By FREDERICK BURKHARDT

TEN YEARS AGO IN GERMANY the word on everyone's lips was "Ordnung." Everyone demanded that the house be put in order, and quickly. One of the reasons why the National Socialists were able to rise to power by constitutional means was that they met this demand.

The order arrived—with a vengeance. It soon became clear that what was at work was not just a new political ideal but a set of beliefs so inclusive that it was more appropriate to talk about it as if it were a religion. A new word—"totalitarianism"—became current to do these features justice. As a program, the new ism had universal strength, not because it was rationally air-tight but simply because it was explicit. The world about which judgments and decisions had to be made no longer presented a bewildering variety of shades and colors, but a checkerboard pattern of black and white. The world of Totalitaria was a world of simple Yes and No, and like its ballots, the alternatives were clearly labeled. There was, in short, all the strength of absolutism—clear-cut guidance, the comfort of unambiguous values, the integration of life around distinct goals.

The cultural unity and power generated by this new absolutism are so striking that a great many intellectuals have come to feel it to be an immense shortcoming that we, who oppose totalitarian values as false and barbarous, have no positive creed of our own. We are not bound together by common standards, they point out. Our culture is a miscellaneous affair, and such a culture has no chance against one which has strongly operative standards, however false these may be. While it is of course necessary to do everything possible to become strong in terms of armaments, long-run victory and security cannot be achieved unless we at the same time become a society with clear-cut values and goals which command common allegiance. As these writers and thinkers see it, the great cultural need today is an order which is antitotalitarian in more than a negative sense. We are clear about what we are *against*. The intellectual task of our time is to formulate equally explicitly what we are to fight *for*. We must oppose Hitler's New Order with a true one which

will not need lying propaganda nor terroristic methods. Since it will be an order based on truth, it will be an order without tyranny.

This ideal of an order without tyranny is certainly irreproachable. Perhaps too irreproachable, for even the Nazis presumably subscribe to it. They seem to be striving for a system in which tyranny will be rendered unnecessary by means of building up satisfactorily conditioned reflexes in the citizenry. Difficult as this task is, it is as nothing compared with the difficulty of working out an order which leaves to individuals the ability and right to exercise intelligence. Perhaps this is why so many of those who argue for the necessity of common standards do not tell us what some of these standards are or how to go about finding them. Presumably they are but preparing an audience for still greater intellects who will present the Doctrine in detail.

There is a sizeable group, however, which cannot be charged with shirking the task of being explicit. It contains some very disparate elements, but because they look at the problem of finding the true order in the same light and give the same general answer, they may be considered together.

The advocates of this view agree that the answer to this search for an order without tyranny is to be found in a return to the past. They believe that the values and standards which offer the effective answer to totalitarianism are already a part of our heritage. According to this school of thought, the reason for the present social and intellectual chaos is that men forsook the veritable foundations of sane living for the pursuit of attractive illusions such as Materialism, Success, Science, or some sort of Humanism. Their recipe for order is a simple one—a "change of heart" and a return to traditional values.

The strongest support for this line of thought is to be found in the various religions. They are the custodians of a set of values for which they claim absolute truth. For them the new order will be really nothing but the perception of the truth of the old order by the generality of men. Some of the more vocal proponents of this view have recently been reminding us of the Middle Ages, when Europe was united under one church and one God, when men adhered to universal standards which were above nation, state, and race. In a world in which the evils of nationalism, state-worship, and racism are only too plain, such an outlook cannot fail to have great attraction.

There are others, however, who will be quick to point out that though medieval Christendom had order, and an order based on values utterly different from those of totalitarianism today, it was far from being an order without tyranny. And *they* will place the "good old days" either in post-Reformation, primitive Christian, or pre-Christian times. But in other respects their argument is the same. They too present us with a set of true values which are opposed to false totalitarian ones. The true values are rooted in reality. They are independent of the times and of the opinions of human beings. They have been forsaken by men, and to them men must return if civilization is to be saved.

This religious back-to-the-faith-of-our-fathers school is paralleled by a secular one. It makes much the same argument, but the values to which we must return are more likely to be called "rational truths"—their theological roots being repudiated or at least not emphasized. Walter Lippman has stated this type of "return" argument very forcefully in an article called "Education versus American Civilization" in *The American Scholar*. He finds the cause of cultural waywardness in the ideals and practices of modern education. "During the past 40 or 50 years," he says, "those who are responsible for education have progressively removed from the curriculum of studies the Western culture which produced the modern democratic state." The result is that now "there is no common faith, no common body of principle, no common body of knowledge, no common moral and intellectual discipline." Mr. Lippman urges us to forsake the elective system and vocational training and get back to the classical roots of Western culture.

Whether they argue from a secular or a religious basis, however, the proponents of "return" all agree that the crisis of modern times arises from the conflict between true and false values. Dorothy L. Sayers, in a recent pamphlet called *Creed or Chaos* expressed their general view, when she wrote:

> The people who say that this is a war of economics or of power-politics, are only dabbling about on the surface of things. Even those who say it is a war to preserve freedom and justice and faith have gone only half-way to the truth. The real question is what economics and politics are to be used for; whether freedom and justice and faith have any right to be considered at all; at bottom it is a violent and irreconcilable quarrel about the nature of God and the nature of man and the ultimate nature of the universe; it is a war of dogma.

She therefore argues for a return to those "corner-stones in that rational structure of human society which is the alternative to world-chaos."

All of the advocates of "return" would agree with the above statement and its clear implication that order depends upon a creed of absolute values, but, unfortunately for unity, a great many of them would not follow Miss Sayers to her conclusion that *the* absolutes are the dogmas of the Catholic Church. They are all insistent upon the order and unity, but it must be on the basis of their particular variety of absolutism. Since each of these varieties lays claims to irrefragable truth, there is not much hope that they will form a front which will be united in anything more than their condemnation of totalitarian ideals as false and barbarous.

If the outlook for unity on the basis of a return to the past is not very bright, the prospects for some new absolutism are no brighter. The reason is that the very quest for a creed of absolutistic values on which to base the true order is a deceptive one. For absolutism breeds the very thing these searchers wish to avoid. It breeds tyranny. It does no good to say that it will be the "false" and the "evil" which will be tyrannized over. That is the claim of every tyranny. Opposition to an absolutism is opposition to the Truth; it is always heresy, and it is in the nature of every absolutism to be intolerant of heresy. It cannot be sincere in the belief that it has the truth and at the same time be tolerant of disagreement and opposition. The ideal of freedom is simply not compatible with absolutism.

There are instances almost every day which reveal very clearly the price which must be paid for a good working absolute. A great many people, for example, feel that certain of the values of democracy are true, in a final sense. In this conviction, they feel justified in depriving of freedom any individual or group holding views inimical to those values. In Wisconsin, the Communist party was considered such a group and it was therefore excluded from the primary elections. Yet most of the people responsible for this action would be greatly surprised and hurt if they were charged with being enemies of the ideal of freedom.

The same process is taking place in other quarters, most of them sincere in the defense of their values. Recently, at the convention of the National Education Association there was a very animated discussion of whether or not the ideals of democracy should be propagandized in the schools. Many of the delegates felt that the time was over for teachers to be impartial. The way to fight Hitler, they believed, was with his

own weapons. The effective antidote to totalitarianism was inoculation with democratic propaganda.

But would this not, as some of the teachers felt, mean the end of the democratic educational system that they are all so anxious to preserve? Would it not mean the predetermination of patterns of thought, the renunciation of the freedom of intelligence? Would it not, in short, amount to tyranny? There is at least one prominent educator who thinks so.

"The uniqueness of democracy," says Boyd H. Bode in a little book called *Democracy as a Way of Life,*

> lies in the fact that indoctrination or inculcation would defeat its own purpose. Something must happen to the pupil other than the docile acceptance of a point of view. This something is a quality of mind and heart, which is sought through a process of continuous reorganization of outlook or way of life. This reorganization requires both the cultivation of sensitiveness to a wide range of diverse values and the disposition to rely for interpretation and synthesis on personal judgment. Prescription or inculcation is obviously an interference with this process. Moreover, the degree to which democratic values are achieved cannot be measured by the simple procedure of inspecting the conclusions at which the pupil arrives. Back of such education lies the faith that these conclusions will be, in the long run and on the whole, in the direction of a democratic way of life. But this faith destroys itself the moment it begins to specify and fence in the conclusions that must be reached.

These examples make clear the dilemma in which the absolutistic antitotalitarian finds himself. In order to combat a way of life which he rejects he must himself adopt the essential principles on which that way of life is based. If victory over totalitarianism is to be found only in a set of values which are absolute then let us at least dispense with the illusion that the true absolutism will be an order without tyranny, and let us, if we do not like tyranny, frankly choose an absolutism which is as mild as possible.

But is it necessary to get into this awkward situation? At the bottom of the position which holds that totalitarianism can only be pried loose with a lever resting upon the fulcrum of absolute verities there is an assumption which must be carefully examined. It is the assumption that order must be based on absolutes, that the alternative to absolutism is intellectual and cultural chaos. This attitude is so deeply ingrained in most minds that it is scarcely ever made explicit. It is simply taken for granted

that to give up the belief in absolute values leads to a philosophy of every man for himself. Even were it admitted that an order based on absolutes is necessarily tyrannical, most people would prefer it to a relativistic disorder which is anarchical. Relativism is a bogy so frightening that many people cling to absolutes which they frankly admit are jaded and feeble, because they are "better than nothing at all."

It is nothing short of remarkable that the bogy should still be terrifying in an age in which the prestige and influence of science are so enormous. It is surely clear even to the scientifically illiterate that science is the antithesis of intellectual chaos, and that it has all the qualities that absolutism is supposed to have: dependability, clear and unambiguous standards, a basis for prediction, objectivity, and universality. Yet it knows no absolutes whatever.

In the face of scientific method, it is simply untenable to hold that relativism is synonymous with intellectual anarchy. The best case that can be made for absolutism is that the sphere of science is limited—that in the field of fact it will do very well, but that absolutes are still requisite in the field of value. This objection is as old as scientific method itself. To examine it would require an extended discussion of what scientific method is. It is not possible to do this here. But the following quotation from M. C. Otto's *The Human Enterprise* will at least suggest that this objection rests upon the erroneous belief that a field of inquiry is scientific because it deals with a particular kind of subject matter:

> What then is scientific method? Stated in the fewest possible words, it is a way of investigation which relies, and relies solely, on disciplined empirical observation and rigorously exact proof. Its aim is objective verification. And by objective verification is meant, first, that the investigator's wishes and wants, his aesthetic, moral, or religious predilections, his faith in or desire for a particular conclusion, have been carefully eliminated as determining factors; and, second, that proof extends beyond inner or personal conviction, to outer or public demonstration. The extent to which this can be done depends upon the matter to be investigated. But whatever the problem may be, it is possible to devise a technique which assures the highest attainable degree of objectivity as just defined; and whenever this is honestly attempted the investigation is scientific in the comprehensive meaning of the term. The significance of objectivity sought in terms of method instead of subject matter is obviously far-reaching. Its relevancy to the problem of a socially responsive and a socially responsible science need not be pointed out.

The point of paramount importance to the present discussion lies in the phrase "objectivity sought in terms of method instead of subject matter." It gives the clue to the way out of the ideological dilemma, for it holds out the possibility that the abandonment of the traditional search for an absolutistic creed based on immutable truth need not end in chaos, providing we exchange it for the search for methods which shall give objectivity. Ideals will then no longer have to claim supernatural guarantees. They will be recognized as hypotheses, subject to revision and correction if they fail to accomplish the tasks for which they were constructed. The traditional attitude to ideals, which invested them with absoluteness, discouraged criticism of those which didn't work or which ceased to be effective under new conditions. It encouraged the attitude of self-blame. This is at the root of most of the criticisms which stress loss of faith or prodigality or bad men for social failures. The ideal is always immune. But even critics using this argument assume the justice of testing an ideal by its results when they blame "false gods" such as material success or Humanism for the woes of the world. To a culture consciously devoted to a relativism based on objective methods of inquiry rather than on absolutes, the failure of an ideal would be a challenge, a stimulus to renewed application of intelligence. The pursuit of ideals in such a culture would be a continuous process of correction and experimentation.

Revolutionary as this change would be, it does not necessitate wiping the cultural slate clean and starting anew. The revolution would be largely in the attitude toward ideals. A good many of the traditional values would be no less effective for being regarded as hypotheses and social instruments instead of as immutable truths. There would, however, be a great deal less beating of breasts and bemoaning of evil humanity, and a more active inquiry into causes and conditions of the breakdown of ideals.

The effective answer to totalitarianism thus need not lie in another absolutism, new or old, because we are under no intellectual compulsion to choose between absolutism and chaos. There is the alternative of a relativistic way of life which will be in essence the extension of the scientific attitude of mind to every sphere of human enterprise. It must, however, be stated as a generalized way of life and formulated in conscious opposition to the totalitarian way.

Here again it is not necessary to start from scratch, for in democracy we already have a social outlook which is implicitly relativistic in spirit. It is relativism which gives strength and meaning to such democratic ideals as freedom of speech and thought, popular government, and the consideration of minority interests. The faith in cooperative intelligence pervades the whole democratic outlook, and such a faith is relativistic to the core.

What is democratic in these ideals is an attitude of mind, a commitment to certain methods of settling conflicts of interests and values. The democratic appeal is not to force, or revelation, or authority but to the method of creative intelligence.

This conception of democracy as the extension of the scientific attitude of mind is not the generally accepted one, though thinkers like John Dewey, Max Otto, and Boyd Bode have advocated it for some time. The general view is that democracy designates only a certain type of political arrangement. But it is becoming more and more evident that there is also such a thing as industrial and economic democracy, and that the adjective "democratic" has a very real meaning when applied to education, administration, and law. Democracy conceived as method includes all of these spheres and more, and thus conceived it becomes a generalized way of life.

If this concept of democracy is merely making explicit and general what has been implicit in it as a political attitude, it follows that the tendency now so prevalent to turn it into a static absolutism is in fact doing the greatest possible harm to the genuine democratic spirit. A great many people who talk of "defending" or "preserving" democracy seem to think of it as though it were a fixed set of institutions and dogmas. It is of course closely bound up with certain institutions now existing, and certain beliefs now prevailing, but to fix those institutions and freeze those beliefs would be to kill the spirit which animates them, for it would stifle the use of free creative intelligence without which democracy as a method ceases to exist. As a dynamic principle of social inquiry it can have no truck with absolutes.

Democracy conceived in terms of method thus offers an all-inclusive way of life which can serve as a genuine alternative to totalitarianism. However, the mere conception is but the beginning. Not only must specific methods still be formulated, but there are intellectual consequences of a very deep-going nature which must be dealt with. The new concep-

tion raises problems which demand the utmost in clear thinking, for it reaches down among some of our most cherished beliefs and our most deeply ingrained habits of thought.

For example, a great many people who will be attracted to this more extensive view of democracy because of its antitotalitarian effectiveness will find themselves confronted with a grave intellectual problem at the very outset. For the rivalry does not stop with totalitarianism. It extends to every other form of absolutism, and this means that the religions, to the extent in which they are absolutistic in spirit and content, are incompatible with the broadened democratic spirit. It is inevitable that the values of this way of life will come into explicit conflict with some of the prevailing religious values. This is of course already the case to some extent under the present dispensation, as instanced by the conflicts which the average intelligent Catholic has when confronted with such social legislation as sterilization or birth control, or the intellectual *malaise* of the average religious parent when certain educational subject matters run counter to cherished religious dogmas. Such cases of conflict will be intensified under the broader concept.

But in its deepest sense the conflict is not confined to isolated and specific choices. It is a conflict between absolutism and democracy in general. If to be religious means to be committed to absolutes then one must decide whether to be religious *or* democratic. Once democracy is accepted as a generalized way of life, it is impossible to take it in small doses or apply it only in certain segments of human affairs and still keep one's intellectual house in order.

This is a hard choice for serious and intelligent religious persons. Indeed, it is so hard that one cannot seriously expect them to make it. Religious values simply are not given up in such a manner, for they are the most cherished values in every life in which they operate. A very small minority of such religious men and women might decide that intellectual consistency can be given up in a matter of such importance, but the vast majority confronted with the choice as it is stated above would unhesitatingly reject the conception of democracy in this generalized sense. It looks as if the new *Weltanschauung* must be left to find adherents as best it can among those who have lost their faith in the traditional religions. To those who still have that faith it must seem a pale intellectual panacea in comparison with the working values which give their life its meaning.

But there are still some questions to be asked of these religious folk before the matter can be considered closed. We have seen how prevalent is the uncriticized assumption that the alternative to absolutism is chaos. Is there not in this situation another, correlate assumption—namely that religious values must of necessity be absolute ones? The question might be put in this way to every religious person: Is it the absolute character of your ideals which gives them their religious value in your life? If the supernatural guarantees were removed from these ideals would they be any the less appealing, any the less forceful? Would they command less devotion and evoke less sacrifice if they were recognized as strongly desired possibilities whose realization depended upon human endeavor? Suppose, in short, that the claims of absolute truth had to be renounced, could the religious values vindicate themselves?

Probably none of these questions can be answered with a simple yes or no. But it is surely not unreasonable to suggest that an ideal can be compelling, directive, and capable of evoking emotional attitudes such as devotion and worship without being grounded in some reality which is not of this world. Such ideals commanding such attitudes are after all a part of ordinary human experience. Millions of people today, to take an obvious instance, are devoted to ideals whose realization they know only too well is dependent upon such factors as tanks and bombers and wise generalship. Nor does this knowledge diminish their devotion. Yet a great many of these same people set aside a certain number of their most deeply-felt ideals into a marked off area of experience which they reserve as "religious." And in that area an ideal must be absolutely guaranteed, it seems, in order to command a following. What is it then that distinguishes these ideals from others considered more mundane? Is there perhaps some trait or character intrinsic to them as ideals which sets them off as different in kind? However one may search one finds at most only differences in degree—they are *more* precious, *more* inclusive, *more* basic, they integrate conduct *more* successfully, but there is nothing about them which makes them *more* certain.

What effect would it have on traditional religious values if the warrant of pre-existing truth were removed from them? Some of them, to be sure, would not be able to stand on their own feet. But there would be many which could dispense with the crutches of absolutism. Nor would they cease to evoke the quality of experience called religious, if they were

regarded as appealing possibilities and guides for conduct rather than as eternal verities. The price would be high—Truth with a capital T is not relinquished without heavy sighs and sad farewells—but the recompense would be a release of energy and intelligence devoted to making ideals into realities. The hypnotic spell of fixed ends would be broken. There is no denying that the hypnotic state has its values, but the conscious awareness that ends are human and precarious inventions, requiring intelligence and imagination to formulate and get realized, will bring new values of its own with it. Foremost among them will be a new awareness to means, methods, and techniques, which brings with it the excitement and challenge of the specific and concrete. In return for the values intrinsic to the contemplation of absolutes we receive the values inherent in the activity of weighing, choosing, testing.

Just as the alternative to absolutism need not be chaos, the alternative to religions based on absolutism need not be nonreligious. Democracy as a way of life is a possible alternative in both cases. Conceived as method it provides the possibilities of non-absolutistic order; as attitude and ideal it functions as a non-absolutistic religion—or, since tradition has made this sound like a contradiction, perhaps one had better say as a relativistic way of life which can inspire a religious response and generate religious values.

In the not very remote future there may occur a state of affairs which can justly be called chaos. Or there may occur the absolutistic new order of Hitler. Or an absolutism which calls itself democracy. But the future *could* hold for us a genuine democracy. Whether it will or not depends on how quickly and effectively the conception of democracy as a way of life gains intelligent and imaginative adherents. If it were a radically new conception the case would be hopeless. But it is not. The ground has already been broken. The ideals and methods which have been tested and prized in the scientific and political fields and in some sections of the general social field must now be extended to comprise a philosophy of life. With it as a frame of reference and guidance there is the possibility of a new order which will be non-absolutistic, which will be characterized not by a creed of fixed and immutable ends, but by its *method* of formulating both ends and means.

ON VULGARITY

By HERMAN SCHNURER

WHAT IS VULGAR? Who says it is? What makes him say it? It is evident at first glance that the concept has social, aesthetic, and ethical aspects which the best dictionaries cannot cover adequately, however suggestive they may be.

One way of attacking the subject is to set down a number of concrete examples which focus on the idea of vulgarity and to see where that takes us. Let us begin with Ruskin's discussion of a Teniers painting which shows a tavern scene. The habitués are engaged in shooting dice. That, says Ruskin, is a vulgar sight, because it shows men in a base and degrading pursuit. I am reminded of that magnificent fresco in Saint Simon's *Memoirs* in which the Duke describes the institution known as *appartement*. Louis XIV emerges out of his private quarters late in the evening after a laborious session with his cabinet. He stalks into the immense galleries. The string orchestra strikes up a tune; liveried lackeys glide in with refreshments. Almost immediately cards make their appearance at scores of tables and everybody begins to gamble with gusto. This is the court which sets the tone of elegance, of urbanity, of refinement for all Europe. There is nothing vulgar about gambling at Versailles. It is not only accepted; it is practically compulsory.

Next, let us take the music which Maeterlinck specifies for the scene in *The Blue Bird* entitled "Gross Pleasures." We are told the sounds are "noisy, hilarious, and vulgar." What is vulgar music? What would Maeterlinck have done about jazz? When it was introduced in Europe right at the time of the first World War, those epithets—"vulgar," "hilarious," "noisy"—were precisely the ones which occurred to cultivated Europeans. Nor was that attitude confined to Europe. It is identical with the one which George Ade finds, a decade earlier, in ladies' literary societies, in our small Midwestern towns. Today jazz and swing are high brow. They have their theorists and are acclaimed from Venice to Stockholm and from Munich to Valparaiso.

I turn to the Oxford unabridged dictionary and I see that a Mrs. Gore apparently thinks wine is a refined drink and ale a vulgarizing one; while a character in Bulwer-Lytton is deeply shocked, in 1853, because somebody married "a vulgarian—a tradesman's daughter." But notice what happens to Baron Dufournel, in Gabriel Chevallier's *Sainte-Colline*. The date is 1913 and the baron, having married a Sausage King's daughter, immediately rejoins the top rank of French nobility. He entertains lavishly, contributes to charity, buys the most reputable pictures. His photogenic wife, a Chicago girl, is in every paper. All this éclat, says the author, gives the baron such standing that he becomes the spokesman for the oldest families in France and is the recognized authority on the hallowed traditions of French aristocracy.

One more example, because it is representative of a well defined attitude. Writing in 1933 on this same subject of vulgarity in the now defunct and lamented *American Spectator* (an offshoot of the old *American Mercury*), Rowland Rowe gives us a truculent and highly diverting list of the things he considers vulgar. Here it is:

The Social Register
Yale's new super-ultra Gothic gymnasium
Rockefeller Center
Exclusive clubs
Madison Avenue "period furniture"
Norman chateaux for stockbrokers
Spanish villas for tabloid publishers
Michael Arlen
Restricted neighborhoods
Mother's Day
William Lyon Phelps
Movie cathedrals
The magazine *Fortune*
Rotary
Hollywood
The Daughters of the American Revolution
Listerine advertisements
Eighty per cent of other advertisements
The "Society" columns of American newspapers

R. R.'s own definition, "admittedly," he says, "a nebulous one," also is solipsistic:

> They are vulgar because, in varying degrees, they are hollow imitations, lacking in integrity and in genuineness; making blatant pretensions to an importance or a grandeur or a beauty they are devoid of, and hiding their inner cheapness with meretricious gilt and tinsel. Ashamed of their real selves and straining to appear other than they are, they reveal all the ugly traits that inevitably accompany sham and pretentiousness: snobbery, tasteless ostentation, pride in mere size, fawning sycophancy, timorous conformity to the passions and prejudices of the moment and a pathological obsession for the supposedly genteel ways and usages.

Most of Rowe's examples are significant; they are essentially in the tradition of Monnier, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Jarry, Lewis, and Mencken. These men, often middle class themselves, are in rebellion against the bourgeois. Essentially aesthetes, and at times bohemian, they are closely assimilated to *l'école du débraillé*—the unbuttoned school—and many of them would sooner *épater le bourgeois* than do almost anything else.

We are now ready for a few generalizations.

The concept of vulgarity is negative. In arriving at any clear grasp of the nature of vulgarity, one must make the same distinction that Carlyle drew between the "laugher and the laughee." A person, an action, an occupation, a beverage, a location, are vulgar with reference to a positive code, to a pronouncd attitude, to a contrasting standard.

The concept of vulgarity is rooted in the capacity for contempt. It implies a hierarchy of values. By and large it springs from the intent to denigrate, to exclude, to dismiss, to ignore. I said "by and large" because the moralistic concept of vulgarity, for example, excludes but does not ignore obscenity and profanity. The Pontifex family (Butler, *The Way of All Flesh*) is obsessed with them.

The concept of vulgarity is evidently relative, but it is not content with being subjective. It tries to enlist group feeling, class attitudes, collective loyalties. Mrs. Gore is not satisfied merely to despise ale. She tries to rally a whole class—a select class—to her predilection for wine. Plato is not content with setting down money-lending as a vulgar occupation. He identifies himself with a patrician caste which shares his superciliousness.

It is this urge for class cohesion which gives full meaning to the concept of vulgarity. At first blush, that would seem to be contradictory to some of the examples I have adduced above. Teniers and his crapshooters would seem to belong wholly to the moralist. The preoccupation of

Maeterlinck with the music of *The Blue Bird* might be ethical but appears to be primarily aesthetic. Yet this pluralism is deceptive. Even a cursory historical analysis cannot ignore the simple fact that all points of departure—the patrician, the moralistic, the aesthetic—lead to the development of class differentiation. During periods of transition, there are changes in emphasis or blending of emphasis; during periods of confusion, the whole concept of vulgarity is blurred. When social stratification is stabilized, the concept acquires its greatest clarity.

II

The very etymology of the word, *vulgus,* crowd—the assimilation of the common man with cheapness, baseness, repulsiveness—is sufficiently enlightening about the most ancient and the most persistent concept of vulgarity, the genteel, aristocratic, patrician pattern of thought. The Athenian orator whose speech is applauded by the multitude and who whispers contemptuously to his neighbor, "Have I said something foolish?" is illustrative of an attitude which centuries and centuries have not succeeded in obliterating.

It is this acceptance of the fundamental inequality among men, this failure to question sufficiently the *status quo,* this deeply rooted conviction that his own caste constituted by rights an inherently superior breed, which induced Aristotle to defend slavery. His rationalization of that institution is extremely interesting: there must be menials to do the heavy work of the community; there must be an elite to perform nobler tasks. Of course, no one denies that practice in leadership, the exercise, the habit of superior functions will in itself develop superior men in the privileged classes. But Aristotle pays no attention to the potential Aesop or Theophrastus in the lower castes. Slavery vulgarizes. Slaves should be kept at debasing tasks. The circle is vicious. It is the same reasoning which prompts the clubwoman to pay her maid a criminal wage: the clubwoman needs to be liberated for higher duties; the maid should be kept where she is.

The Aristotelian theory of slavery would imply respect of physical labor; but everything in the patrician attitude points to the contrary. During his visit to the United States, Matthew Arnold was struck with the universal regard for manual performance he found in this country. He was not slow to contrast it with the attitude of the Greeks, and of Plato, in particular, toward physical tasks. He could have stressed more

heavily than he did the attitude of the English gentleman toward the common worker.

That attitude has permeated English education and indeed the whole structure of the English civil service. The system was aimed at excluding everybody but a very narrow class. It wasn't so much what the candidate knew, or what he thought, that mattered. Did he speak with the proper intonation? Was he connected with acceptable people? Did he "belong"? The whole force of the code of behavior and of manners was in the direction of fortifying the ruling caste. Dr. Pendennis spends many anxious years trying to erase the memory of the time when he was an apothecary, just as his contemporary, M. Poirier, wants to make sure that his daughter will never see anything in her life which will remind her that he had been a carriage maker.

"The great retire from routs. . . And cry . . . 'Vulgars! that never wax-lights handle.' "

The deepest worry of the Marquis de Prestes in *Mr. Poirier's Son-in-Law* is that his dinner party will be spoiled by the presence of untitled men and their spouses. There are only three occupations for a nobleman, he says when he is urged to take a job: bishop, landowner, and fighter. Everything else is contemptible.

The connection between occupation and the blueblood concept of vulgarity is apparent if we simply enumerate two series: rat catcher, bookie, undertaker; author, doctor, architect. Consider the word "boor," which is very close to "vulgarian." The word simply means farmer. It is closely assimilated in intent with "churl" and in French with the withering "goujat," a kitchen menial.

You will remember that Michael Arlen figures in the enumeration of vulgarians cited by Rowland Rowe to clarify his definition. The explanation he gives is pertinent here. "Michael Arlen is vulgar because his acceptance of the ideals and standards of the fashionable moons he depicts is as unquestioning, as fawning as that of the most gushing and swooning of 'Society' editors." So far so good. But then Rowe goes on; "Essentially the bulk of his [Arlen's] novels are servant-girl romances with costumes by Chanel and decorations by Oliver Messell." The *goujat* note: we have here the occupational, the Aristotelian connotation. It is the plain people who say, "Il n'y a pas de sot metier"—there is nothing low about earning

one's living. So long has literature been the monopoly of a small privileged group that its notions permeate almost the entire corps of writers.

The attitude of the planter aristocracy of the South towards Yankees and of the denizens of the Grammercy district towards Mr. Kober's Bronx would seem to be primarily geographical. At bottom, however, that too is an offshoot of the same genteel tradition: geography—the wrong side of the tracks, of the river, of the Mason-Dixon line; religion—the Irish in Thackeray's Clavering, the Jews in college fraternities; occupation—money lender, apothecary, cobbler (as in *Julius Caesar,* whose patricians horrified Tolstoy by their utterly snobbish attitude toward the ordinary Roman). We have in the blue-blood tradition, from Plato to Castiglione and from Chesterfield to Hamilton, to Owen Wister, the best defined, the most consistent, the most confident, the most pervasive concept of vulgarity. It rests on exemption from the common tasks of man, on exclusiveness, on contempt for everyone except a chosen few who dominate all of society—who indeed *are* Society, capitalized. The rest is nothing.

III

The moralistic concept of vulgarity coincides historically with the displacement of the aristocracy of birth by the moneyed and industrial classes. We have seen how unconcerned the aged and increasingly religious Louis XIV, that paragon of gentlemen, was about the moral aspects of gambling. Ruskin's reaction would have filled him with stupefaction.

Molière's *Misanthropist* epitomizes the viewpoint of the well-bred man, *l'honnête homme,* toward morality and toward vulgarity. It is the standard which Puritanism will overthrow for many complex reasons, not the least one being economic. In the sphere of manners, Molière anticipates Talleyrand's advice to his diplomatic agents: "No zeal, gentlemen!" The liberties of speech and action which were to become so despicable to the bourgeois leave him unmoved. One of his learned ladies is wooed by a man who wants to marry her without the long preliminaries of courtship. "All I can say," she says, "is that I consider marriage an altogether shocking thing. How can one endure the thought of lying by a man that's really naked?" The audience for whom this line was written greeted it with gales of laughter.

It never would have occurred to a learned judge and a most respected gentleman like Montesquieu that his *Persian Letters* would appear un-

seemly. He might have thought them mischievous or provocative. His harem scenes afforded innocent enjoyment, but were certainly not vulgar to his readers.

Thus, too, with Sheridan's gay young blades. They swore with virtuosity, but they never felt they were declassing themselves by uttering imaginative oaths which were primarily exercises in verbal ingenuity. Robert Graves says in his *Lars Porsena, or The Future of Swearing and Improper Language* that "though swearing in fashionable society began to decline as an art about the same time as the wig disappeared, it flourished among the lower classes for fifty years longer." By the end of the nineteenth century the new standards of gentility had progressed so far that Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., was bowled over with indignation when he heard of Captain Corcoran's lapse:

> Chorus: He said damn it. Damn it. Damn it.
> Sir Joe: My pain and my distress
> I find it impossible to express.

We know, too, how Butler's Christina refers to hell in *The Way of All Flesh*. It is "that impossible other place."

The Puritan Revolution represents an enormous multiplication of taboos; it is replete with negative attitudes; and it enlarges to infinite proportions the range of the concept of vulgarity. No English or American contemporary of Hugo at the time he published *Les Misérables* could have written anything remotely resembling his celebrated two-page prose lyric about Cambronne's scatalogical expletive on the battlefield of Waterloo.

The growth of taboos brought with it a vast flood of euphemisms. Everyone is familiar with the *breast of chicken* sandwich which became a *chest of chicken* sandwich. While the word *pissoir* is boldly spelled out in Flanders, it becomes *W.C.* (a foreign language term) in France, or simply *Water* (pronounced vatair'); while in England it is very frequently a *convenience*. In this country it is a *toilet*, a *lounge*, a *rest room*, a *comfort station*. In Graves' *Future of Swearing* there is a story about a soldier who had been shot in the buttocks at the battle of Loos. Asked by a lady visitor where he had been wounded, he replies, "I'm sorry, Ma'm, I don't know: I never learned Latin."

H. L. Mencken's monumental *American Language* contains a delightful section on euphemisms. He notes, for example, that in Pasadena,

the public garbage trucks belong to the *Table-Waste Disposal Department.* He recounts the study of Dr. J. M. Steadman, Jr., of Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, who had 361 students of both sexes list the words which repelled them:

> Some of the . . . votes were: against *ass,* 10; against *bull,* 5; against *knocked-up,* 2; against *pimp,* 2; against *garter,* 2; against *harlot,* 3; against *teat,* or *tit,* 2. Rather curiously, the merely vulgar words got the highest adverse votes, e.g., *belch,* 25; *sweat,* 33; *puke,* 51; *guts,* 59; *stink,* 69; *belly,* 87.

The most interesting observation in Mencken's analysis is that euphemisms themselves become vulgar in connotation.

> Thus *nerts* got six adverse votes, *halitosis* got five, *to pet* got two, *to neck* got eight, and *hussy* got fourteen. . . . Euphemisms, says Dr. Leonard Bloomfield in *Language,* "may in time come to be too closely associated with the meaning, and in turn become taboo. Our word *whore,* cognate with the Latin *carus* (dear), must have been at one time a polite substitute for some word now lost.

The puritanic concept of vulgarity, like that of the blueblood, is the negative expression of a set of values: thrift, diligence, abstemiousness, worship. Hence the attitude toward gambling (unless it be on the stock-market), toward swearing, and significantly, toward saloons and places of like repute. Hence the hostile and contemptuous attitudes towards profaning anything connected with theology, including "that dreadful other place." Hence the struggle to expel from the mind bodily parts and functions, and in particular those which are associated with digestion and sex.

But the puritanic concept of vulgarity is also a class concept. In a celebrated essay, Max Weber showed the role which Protestant ethics played in preparing the capitalist spirit. The same theme is treated by Siegfried in *America Comes of Age* and by Cunningham in *Christianity and Social Science.* It was still R. E. Tawney, however, who was to write the classic on the subject. His *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* does ample justice to the contribution of "the godly discipline"; to the impetus it gave democracy; to the men in the puritanic revolution who were humane and disinterested. Says Tawney:

> The general climate and character of a country are not altered, however, by the fact that here and there it has peaks which rise into an ampler air. The distinctive note of Puritan teaching was different. It was individual responsibility, not social obligation. Training its pupils to the mastery of others through mastery

> of self, it prized as a crown of glory the qualities which arm the spiritual athlete for his solitary contest with a hostile world, and dismissed concern with the social order as the prop of weaklings and the Capua of the soul.

In this "solitary contest" it is a man's duty to get rich. It has become his Calling. "If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this," says Richard Steele, whom Tawney quotes, "if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your Calling, and you refuse to be God's steward." Poverty is not a misfortune; it is the proof of moral turpitude. Relief is bad; the dissolute fellow who is asking for assistance will merely by debased by it; it will undermine his character. Let him develop moral self-sufficiency. It will be a tonic to his will. Let him commune with his Maker for inspiration to fulfill his Calling; *bene orare est bene laborare*. Let him discipline himself, like a soldier on the battlefield. Let him learn to deny his body, to endure privation.

If in the pursuit of gain, the man who has developed the "economic virtues" runs the risks of covetousness and of insensibility, that is still better than sloth and vice, both unprofitable.

Thus runs the analysis of Tawney. The Puritan concept of vulgarity which has supported this social outlook is so inclusive because it takes in every aspect of private and public life; the patrician concept is neutral in many areas. Of the two, the Puritan concept has had much wider diffusion, because it is useful to the modest entrepreneur, to the small shopkeeper even more than to the Rockefellers. With the advent of absentee ownership, the Puritan concept of vulgarity has tended to disappear for the wealthiest of the bourgeois. Intermarriage with aristocrats and aristocratic schooling for their children have done a great deal in that direction. The world wars and the collapse of *laissez faire* are making enormous inroads. Even the sternest of moralists will tolerate expressions and gestures which would have seemed utterly distasteful to them twenty years ago. But for vast masses of people who belong to the middle classes or who aspire to join them, the concept of vulgarity still reflects a grim and fearful rejection of those acts, gestures, attitudes, and words which encourage carousing, dissipation, idleness, bodily indulgence, levity, prodigality.

IV

Though the moralistic concept of vulgarity has lasted over two hundred years, it was under attack from the very first, and from two sides.

The bluebloods scoffed at the upstarts, the parvenus, the *nouveaux riches.* The artists, the Brahmins, the Bohemians sneered at the Philistines, the Joseph Prudhommes, the Homais, the Luzhins, the Babbitts.

The first manifestations of industrialism were unspeakably ugly: grimy factories, obscene slums, polluted rivers, befouled landscapes; smoke, slag, stench. We are only beginning to emerge from that now.

But the indifference of the bourgeois to his more intimate surroundings is just as great. And the aesthete attacks him for the vulgarity of his taste in pictures, in furniture, and in clothes. Take one detail: the heavy gold-plated watch chain which graced the stomachs of more prosperous citizens during the '40's, '50's and '60's. Balzac, Flaubert, and Labiche have exploited it to the full.

The rebellion of the artist vents itself in another manifestation of his concept of vulgarity: it is the constant derision of the pecuniary standard applied to aesthetic objects. The most frequent taunt is against the man who tells you what he has paid for his food, possessions, objects of art. But the most acrimonious jibes center around the application of countinghouse habits to the artistic sphere. "You mean you paid 5,000 francs for this picture?" M. Poirier asks the Marquis de Presles, who has just purchased a painting from a starving genius. "Why, before dinner you could have bought it for a hundred."

The imputation of crassness and of cheapness, of pompousness, of emptiness is levelled against another Philistine trait: grandiloquence. Lieuvain's speech at the country fair in *Madame Bovary;* the stuffy orations of Dr. Stockman's brother, the burgomaster in Ibsen's *Enemy of the People;* the sublime thoughts which Perrichon couches in his travel notebook—one side for expenses, the other side for noble reflections—to the articulate artist, these are the concrete expressions of Babbitty vulgarity. (I say "Babbitty" advisedly. George F. Babbitt has existed for at least a hundred years.)

Compare two speeches, Lieuvain's at the Yonville Country Fair in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary,* and Babbitt's address at the Get-Together Fest of the Zenith Real Estate Board, held at the Venetian Ball Room of the O'Hearn House.

First, Lieuvain:

> Gentlemen! May I be permitted first of all to address you on the subject of our meeting today (and this sentiment will, I am sure, be shared by all of you); may I be permitted, I say, to tender my respects to the higher authorities, to the government, to the monarch, gentlemen, our sovereign, our beloved king, to whom no branch of public or private prosperity is indifferent, and who, with a hand as firm as it is wise, directs the chariot of state amid the incessant perils of a stormy sea, knowing, moreover, how to make peace respected as well as war, industry, agriculture, and the fine arts.

Next, Babbitt:

> Gentlemen, it strikes me that each year at this annual occasion, when friend and foe meet together and lay down the battle ax, and let the waves of good fellowship waft them up to the flowery slopes of amity, it behooves us, standing shoulder to shoulder as fellow citizens of the world, to consider where we are, both as regards ourselves and the common weal.

The reader will note the recurrence of glittering imagery, gawdy, incongruous, overpowering. He will also note the prevalence of garbled pictures. We have here what the French call a *charge,* a very definite elaboration, a strong insistence on the point, a raging, ferocious exaggeration. It is a far cry from the calm contempt of the patrician. The aesthetic concept of vulgarity is much more exasperated, much more passionate. That is because it has a different class basis. This aesthetic concept is tinged with a feeling of insecurity. Unlike the patrician, unlike the bourgeois, the artist has seldom dominated society. Within the group itself, competition is more ruthless; personal temperament has fuller play, subjectivity is more frequent. The convention of unconventionality often makes the artist more strident and erects barriers not only between his group and other groups of society, but also between the varieties of his own group. Remember the quarrel between the artists in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme.*

* * *

We are ready for a summary and a conclusion.

The concept of vulgarity is negative by nature and it is comprehensible only against a background of well defined positive attitudes. The concept implies a hierarchy of values; it is rooted in the capacity for contempt—contempt of anything which questions or disturbs a frozen hierarchy of values. The concept is relative; but though it may be entirely subjective, and anarchistic, it generally seeks to reinforce group cohesion. It goes

beyond that: it is essentially a class concept—blue blood, puritanical, or aesthetic.

I have alluded very rapidly to confused frames of reference (to use a glib phrase). Rowland Rowe doesn't know which he despises the more, Rotarians or servant girls. Thus, too, Aldous Huxley, in a series of essays on vulgarity—principally an attack on Poe—wavers between patrician and aesthetic exclusiveness. Maeterlinck is precisely in the same case. The overwhelming mass of etiquette manuals oscillate between the genteel and the puritanical codes. It might be a little too casuistical to refine on the matter of dosages, i.e., whether somebody is two-thirds Aristotelian and one-third art-for-art's-sake. But it isn't at all useless to note the conditions under which the concept disappears.

Anyone who reads the speeches of Danton or of Marat will notice the complete absence of the whole idea. I believe the explanation lies in the temporary prevalence of the dream that society might become classless. The same leveling influence is at work in Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front,* as it is in a host of books which deal with the rank and file of citizen armies (officers, though free in the matter of profanity, are nevertheless as petrified in their other attitudes as the stiffest Japanese).

I do not mean to imply that war and revolution are the only possible forces that may blast away the concept of vulgarity or that they necessarily do that. They will do it to the extent that they are equalitarian.

At bottom, all concepts of vulgarity are supercilious, as is the word itself. They are wholly inconsistent with the democratic spirit. We could find other terms for expressing our disapprovals. To say that anything is tasteless, immoral, nasty, cheap, vicious, base or vile, by saying that it is something done or loved by the common people, is a snobbish way of speech.

NOTES ON THE WAR AND THE PEACE

By LOUIS DOLIVET

PUBLIC OPINION IN EUROPE was never before more ready for a reconstruction which will insure the fullest development of European democracy in every field. Nationalism in its extremist aspects—exaggeration of national pride, army and fighting capacity, belief in its own superiority—all these things made bankruptcy. The most prominent nationalistic and militaristic leaders of the occupied countries are in the first ranks of German puppets. It was the Dutch Commander-in-chief, a man who had more power in his hands than the Queen, who failed in his task. It is Pétain in France. It is the leaders of the nationalistic, fascistic parties in Norway, Holland, Spain, Belgium, and Denmark who are the most important supporters of the foreign ruler. Never before was the raw material of a revolution more apparent in Europe than now. The misery, the opposition between the occupation forces and local populations, between state employees and average citizens, are becoming so profound that we can really speak of a revolutionary situation in Europe. From this situation may come, with the democratic revolution in Europe against Hitler and Hitlerian principles, the total disappearance of the so-called rightist or reactionary parties because of their cooperation with the Nazis.

Europe has seen all the horrors of war and of fascist domination but in the same period the realization of the nature of national and international society and the knowledge of its process has been deepened and intensified.

The terrible events of the last two years have developed by a kind of inner necessity the desire to become creative, to find new and higher forms of human society. In the most terrible catastrophe of European and, I think, of world history, the imagination of a great and growing number of people has led to a better understanding of the whole structure of international relations. The egoistic feelings covered frequently

by patriotic phrases are replaced by something higher—which is the new hope of Europe.

Europe—I mean the immense mass of people—is discussing now the problems of world organization. And this is a progressive development which has enormous importance. The peoples in Europe, living under terrible circumstances, realize through their tragic history the necessity of a better support of those ideals which in the recent past interested only limited groups and societies.

In other words, immense progress in the education of the great masses of people has been made, not through books, but through facts. If previously the common people had been moved by the same interest and the same knowledge, the war would have been avoided. Now, if we make certain to establish the policies of the democracies on the foundation of those aspirations, it may still be possible to avoid the victory of modern barbarism.

Two fundamental results have come out of the occupation of Europe: first, the profound belief and knowledge that no European nation can secure its independence and its national existence without taking into account the general situation on the European continent as a whole; and secondly, the strong conviction that dictatorship is a danger to the average citizen and therefore that the problem of democracy is of much greater importance to the citizens of every European state than it was before the war.

The first result has, as a consequence, the diminution of nationalism.

Superficial observers of the European situation claim the contrary, because they draw a wrong conclusion from the fact that the average citizen of an occupied country naturally says: "Oh, my God, I would do anything in order to oust the Germans from my country." This sentence which I myself heard very frequently after the armistice in France does not imply a rebirth of nationalism, but simply means that the people everywhere would like to have the Germans out of their country because they want to be free again, and they know that this is impossible under Nazi rule.

Except in certain countries which are considered as belonging to the Reich, the Germans are not propagandizing for the purpose of destroying the respective languages of the countries they have overrun, but they are making great efforts to create or to develop French, Danish, Spanish, Bel-

gian, and Czechoslovak fascist parties. From this point of view, it can be said that the Pan-Germanism which undoubtedly governs the actions of the Hitler Government, is covered by a respect for national language or habit. What is important to Hitler's Germany is not that all the French speak German, but that all the French work for Germany.

A corollary of the second result of the occupation is that the organization of a real national and international democracy in Europe will be easier today than ever before. The constructive values of democracy now appear much more clearly related to the vital needs of the average citizen.

Once we are in agreement on this situation, we have next to consider the transformations that will be brought about in Europe in every field as a result of this new emphasis on democracy.

Four Conceptions of Foreign Policy

Before the war, Europe had known four different conceptions of international politics: first, the balance of power, which was a policy pursued especially by Great Britain; second, the opportunist policy, followed by a certain number of countries of which the characteristic representatives were Turkey, Poland, Rumania, and Hungary, among others; third, the policy of collective security, which no European country put into consistent and practical use; and fourth, the policy of neutrality, of which the Scandinavian countries and the other members of the Oslo group were the most interesting representatives.

Up until ten years ago it looked as if the half-measures of every one of these four groups would be sufficient to preserve peace. The first twinge of anxiety came in the beginning of 1932 with the failure of the Disarmament Conference and the Japanese aggression against China. These two events, which followed a previous evidence of weakness on the part of the League of Nations during the world-wide economic crisis in 1930, showed the practical failure, through the weakness of the participating governments, of the whole system of the League. Practically speaking, public opinion in Europe has been uninterested in the Geneva institution since that time, and confidence in Geneva has approached zero.

When Hitler came into power, he found neither determined governments nor determined public opinions confronting him. The field of action was wide open for adventure in Europe, and every serious analysis by Hitler's advisers indicated to him that it was not dangerous for Ger-

many to violate her agreements, to do what no republican German government could do before, and especially to mark through Germany's retirement from the League of Nations the incapacity of that institution to oppose aggression.

In the following period, the conscious purpose of all European governments was to strengthen nationalistic feelings, and an opportunist policy prevailed in international affairs. Never before was there so little sympathy in the popular opinion of one country for another as in 1939. France had no confidence in Great Britain and Great Britain did not like France; both of them were suspicious of Belgium who herself had no confidence in France and in Great Britain. The great powers regarded the Scandinavian countries as weak and self-centered, and they in turn had the same opinion of the great powers. Czechoslovakia did not like Poland, and Poland hated the young democratic state. Rumania and Yugoslavia had authoritarian governments which dreamed of a Europe freed from limitations on dictatorship. They very naively hoped, as did the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Georges Bonnet, that Germany was more concerned with destroying democracy than with enslaving them; it seemed to them that there was no reason for opposition to the Reich.

This is a picture of the saddest and weakest period in European history, for which all the European governments, without a single exception, were responsible.

But this governmental attitude cannot be identified with the public opinion of Europe. The elections which were held in Europe in 1936 and 1937, especially in France and England, were elections in which the most important political parties pledged themselves to the highest respect for an international policy based on collective security. The governmental coalition in France known as the "Popular Front," comprising principally the Socialist and Radical-Socialist parties supported by the Communists, had a very clear program in this sense and promised French public opinion that they would not, under any circumstances, follow a policy so utterly lacking in principle as that of M. Laval. In Great Britain the Conservative Party pledged itself to a policy of support for the League even more strongly than did the Labor Party. But in both countries, the governments which were formed upon the basis of the elections did not respect their pledges concerning the international policy of their countries. The Ethiopian War, and to an even greater extent the war in Spain,

proved that the governments of the two most important countries in Europe were not ready to follow a policy based on the principles of collective security and international law. The excuse advanced, for example in the Spanish affair, was that the countries were divided on the issue. But this was a pretext, because the only way in which public opinion could express its will was through the elections and that will had been clearly expressed. Furthermore, the by-elections held in order to replace some members in the Parliaments of Great Britain and France showed that public opinion was more than ever attached to these principles.

The most interesting election from this viewpoint was that of Mr. Vernon Bartlett, who, for the first time in England's electoral history, refused to comment on domestic affairs and told his auditors at every meeting that his only concern was with the international field and that if he was elected he would fight in the House for the principles of collective security. And he was elected.

In France, in the same period, every meeting called for collective security had ten times more success than the meetings called in opposition to it. For example, in Paris, People's Front meetings or International Peace Campaign meetings were attended by 50,000 to 400,000 people. No fascist meeting during the same period had more than 25,000 maximum attendance. In 1938 and 1939 when two big liberal newspapers, the *News Chronicle* in London and *L'Oeuvre* in Paris, organized surveys of public opinion on international matters, with the assistance of the Gallup Institute, it was found that a majority of 70 per cent were for collective security, 20 per cent were against and 10 per cent were indifferent. The cheering crowd after the return of Daladier from Munich was estimated at 25,000 in Paris—a figure much smaller than the weakest meeting in support of the principles he betrayed. The government was so much aware of this reality that it had to forbid all meetings on international affairs for many weeks.

For public opinion in Europe the war was the visible sign, not of the bankruptcy of the policy of collective security, but of the bankruptcy of the opportunist polices of the governments. But even the war itself failed to have a noticeable effect on the methods of the French and British governments; during this whole period the vital issues of democracy and international organization were sidetracked. In about ten so-called propaganda speeches to which I myself listened as a member of the French

Air Army, the words "Democracy," "International Organization," "Collective Security," "League of Nations," were not mentioned. When I was charged to speak, my colonel was very puzzled and surprised at my mentioning these principles as the war aims of France. Even more, he began to be suspicious of me. Attitudes of appeasement were still dominant in governmental and military circles.

But after France collapsed, the Nazi occupation destroyed every possibility of an understanding with Hitlerism.

America's Moment

This is the background against which to examine the influence of American war aims on a European settlement. First of all, it is necessary to say that this influence will not be automatically decisive as many Americans believe. The American influence cannot and will not come as a miracle which will solve, without any friction, the European problem. The influence of America in the settlement will depend on the part which she will have played in the winning of the victory. Her influence will increase with her increased help in this mortal fight against Hitlerism.

Secondly, the influence of America will depend on the content of the American plan of organization. If this plan is really inspired by the social and economic necessities of Europe, and if America will pledge herself to play an important part in the guarantees to fulfill this plan, her influence will naturally increase.

Then, the influence of the American plan will depend to some extent on the auspices under which it is presented—whether by the American government or by private organizations. The success of the plan will also depend on how soon it is presented. If the European governments have other plans for which they have mobilized their own public opinions, and the American plan comes later, its influence will be weaker. And, finally, the influence of American policy on a European settlement will depend on the popularization of the plan—on how far the Americans will have informed public opinion of their real intentions.

The technique of a Peace Conference is a special one, because of the concentration in one single place of the representatives of more than fifty governments, each with its own propaganda machinery set up to prove its own singular military accomplishments in the collective interest. It is, in a certain sense, the same technique as that used in an election. Every

candidate wants to prove that he has done the best job. The thousands of delegates from private organizations who will also invade the town where the conference is held will only add to the tension. In such a charged but foggy atmosphere important members of a government and even their technical experts become inaccessible to exponents of even the most important ideas and plans.

In order to influence a Peace Conference it is necessary to foresee the little details and to have a complete plan for every step from the first to the last day of the Conference; but the American influence on the European settlement will depend especially on the work done in the respective countries. For example, if American and French representatives work very hard in France, and American and British in Great Britain, and still other Americans in other countries, then naturally the influence of the American plan will be much greater.

One of the great dangers which a Peace Conference will face lies in discussion of borders. A second great danger is the artificial nationalistic atmosphere created in certain European countries by calculated military uprisings and artificial frontier incidents.

Another lies in a major misconception of the situation in the Balkans and in Central Europe. Many people in these countries say, "You can't have a sound democracy or offer an international guarantee of human rights to the natives here. They're too backward." If applied, such a misconception would serve only as a pretext to delay a real democratic system. For example, in Rumania or in Bulgaria, the fact that the peasants have not attained a sufficient degree of civic conscience is no reason to give the police of those countries absolute right of life and death over them. On the contrary, it is a reason to guarantee a stronger international control, the application of the fundamental principles of democracy, and to organize, with the help of an international educational staff, peasant education.

This problem of the Central European countries is one of the most vital because, apart from Czechoslovakia, they have a tendency to create immediately a half-dictatorial power—later to become a full dictatorial power menacing international cooperation.

Likewise, the whole problem of membership in the international community must be studied very carefully. One of the most fundamental principles of admission to the community or of remaining in it must be

the truly representative character and the democratic policy of the respective governments. No government which has suppressed the free expression of the will of the people should be considered as a member of an international organization. However, this would not lead to permanent interventions and police activities of the international institution. The formation and the national existence of a state rests on an institutional basis. If institutions are built up through an international decision in such a way that they make impossible a violation by the respective governments, it may be assumed that these institutions will become more and more supported by public opinion and will become a part of the national tradition of a country. Examples of what can be done by peaceful means are the Swiss Confederation and the United States of America. Then there are the Scandinavian countries, which show how deeply institutions may penetrate into national traditions. I note the separation of Norway from Sweden in 1905, which took place without a single shooting. The respect for the popular will was so deeply entrenched in the conscience of every Swedish citizen that nobody would risk incidents.

A more recent example of the creation of the democratic tradition through institutions is the example of Czechoslovakia. Compared with the other Central European states, the Czechoslovak government was one of the most developed, and though young, its institutions created a progressive democracy. Naturally, there were a lot of weaknesses in detailed application. But these weaknesses would have come to an end if the Western Powers and the League of Nations had fought to develop democracy instead of encouraging ruthless dictatorship as in the Balkan countries, in Poland, and in Italy.

The so-called complexity of a European settlement, therefore, is not a geographical one, nor a minority one, but is essentially political and economic. And it must be based on the two principles of a limitation of national sovereignty and the establishment of democratic institutions.

If the new Peace Conference is inspired by the fundamental principle of national and international democratic organization, it will find that no geographical difficulty is insoluble, as no geographical difficulty was insoluble in the United States of America. Concerning the minority problem, the fact alone that differences between majority and minority are admitted is a concession to the absolutist conception of the state. In America, there are many citizens of different national extractions, but

they are not minorities in the political sense nor in the sense of their rights as citizens. The European settlement is essentially a political and economic problem because it is a problem of the nature of organization of every member state and of the constitutional structure of the future international society.

* * *

During the war in order to destroy a very powerful enemy one may make all sorts of alliances, recognize and support many free governments. But this does not mean that it will be possible to obtain a European settlement through the same governments and through the same methods only. The final decision about the structure of Europe will largely depend on the approval of the peoples of the occupied countries. In their opinion the moral authority of a government in exile is not higher than the authority of those who are suffering and resisting Hitler. After two years of war and of dictatorship, Europe seeks a complete economic and political democracy. To this end, one great social group is in movement in Europe—the working group. In a very real sense the working class will come out of the war strengthened and matured by experience. I tried, with a group of friends working in occupied and unoccupied France, to find out exactly what the workers were thinking. The conclusion we reached was that the political differences in their own ranks have largely disappeared. They are much more aware than before of the *clique aspect* of the distinctions between left parties.

The problem of how to make a workers' organization really efficient and how to evade the danger of bureaucracy is a difficult one. For our discussion about a European settlement it is important to notice that the European worker is both European and internationally minded.

Let us not forget that since the appearance of scientific socialism in the middle of the last century, the elite of the working class were strongly inspired and organized in this sense. Every war brought them promises and every aftermath disillusionment. Now the Hitler regime has challenged every one of them and they will be an important factor for victory. Once the victory is won they will ask for fundamental domestic reforms and for strong international machinery.

The time is ripe for some type of continental union and world organization. Many experts pretend that this union is a utopia; that it cannot be realized because of the national differences of languages and of a certain

number of other technical difficulties. It is evident that there will be a certain number of difficulties to be overcome before a union can be created, but I do not think the difficulties are greater than those which occurred in the last century in Europe with the consolidation of most of the European states. If union means something more than constitutional machinery, something more than the domination of a predetermined bloc, if it really means the first institutional step toward the elimination from national policy of every possibility to destroy the harmony of the Continent, then this union will be of great historical importance.

In the elaboration of plans for a European or world settlement, the common mistake is frequently made of doing away with repressive institutions without first substituting a constructive program for an international community. Speaking first of all from the point of view of public opinion, it is quite evident that it is difficult to create enthusiastic support or to educate the average citizen to world citizenship if all the plans for international institutions start with the repressive aspect. From my own experience in dealing with public opinion, with large groups of workers or farmers, I know how much people are impressed by a constructive program of an international character. In Geneva, in the beginning of 1938, I was secretary of an International Agricultural Conference with representatives of large farm cooperative societies from about twenty countries. In discussing the program of international organization, those farmers, contrary to what the staff of the League of Nations and the International Labor Office believed of them, were ready to accept far-reaching limitations of national sovereignty in order to organize a constructive international cooperation. Now many research groups are suggesting subfederations and regional agreements; and are always giving as a central argument that these are easier to organize than a general federation. To this position, the experience of the little entente of the Balkan federation offers entirely contrary proofs, and even the Scandinavian federation had only a value in peace time and was of no value at all for the collective security of the members of the Scandinavian group.

For all of these reasons the European settlement, like every international settlement, must begin with a constructive program for the creation of an international league of democratic states. It is very important that the question of a permanent popular representation to such an international institution should be secured in a definite form because the in-

direct representation through delegates nominated by governments becomes insufficient.

Here is your immense opportunity—the American moment.

With the authority you exercise, with your immense political, economic, and intellectual influence, you can have, within the limits of my previous observations, a decisive importance for the European settlement. I think personally that private organizations, scientific institutions, magazines, all kinds of public tribunes may have an equal influence with governments. Private organizations in a democracy are the proper political methods for promoting advanced ideas, for going further and faster than their government.

But let us not limit ourselves to constitutional aspects only, as do some promoters of federal ideas. Let us go deeper into the profound aspirations and needs of the peoples of Europe. If the temporary master of Europe can close physically the frontiers of Europe, he cannot seal the political frontiers.

Every step forward in the plans of future world organization is a step toward shortening the war and bringing us nearer to our goal of world organization. Europe was not antifascist before because the governments and the press concealed from the people the truths about Hitlerism, but one year of life under Hitlerism has made the peoples of Europe a unanimous force opposed to its horrors. Fascism endangers not only the existence and prosperity of nations as a whole but endangers every individual, destroys his freedom of movement, depresses his standard of life. The ruthless bureaucracy of the Nazi party and the Hitler military machine are taking away from the average citizen whatever they please—his property, his freedom, his work, his wife, and his children.

The conclusion is that something formidable is happening in the conscience of Europe; something which may have as profound repercussions as the French Revolution of 1789.

The peoples of Europe are undergoing a fundamental examination of conscience which is rare in history. Perhaps it was necessary for a tired Europe to go through great suffering and to see in the high centers of world culture the fanatic hordes marching like robots, in order to understand the value of democracy. This understanding exists and it is the basis for the European contribution to world organization.

First Things First

We have been speaking about the European settlement, but we all know that this settlement is not possible under the domination of Hitler. His domination would incur permanent civil war and endless suffering in Europe and most probably in the whole world. The German aggression against the USSR gives us, the democracies all over the world, a unique chance both from the military and from the political point of view. If this chance is utilized, then our discussion has the greatest reality, and for this reason I think it is necessary to end on this point.

The military chance is that we may force Germany into a two-front war. For the moment, it is not a two-front war, but it is a one-front war on the Russian battlefields with British bombings on the Ruhr. It may become a two-front war if the democracies attack on another front in Europe or in North Africa. Hitler's move may be catastrophic for him if the democracies move now—if the world navy and the air force of the democracies are immediately put into action—if military cooperation with Russia becomes concrete. But it is of vital importance not to think in static terms and not to try to obtain only those things which were important a week ago. It is essential to do the things which are important now.

The political chance is to utilize the sentiment created by this aggression in Europe and to utilize the situation created by the withdrawal of the best German troops from the western part of the continent. Two hundred million people of Europe, ten thousand political divisions enslaved and living under the most horrible conditions, have waited for this chance. The workers, who are the main resisting force in Europe—whatever their political tendencies may be—hate this and all other aggressions.

Europe can be unified politically and can strongly support a military offensive now. But if this chance is not utilized, Germany will mobilize tomorrow against "British imperialism" and "Yankee dictatorship" those whom she mobilizes today against Bolshevism. The result will be a prolongation of the war, if not the blackout of world civilization. The time to act is now!

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CONTRIBUTORS

Carey McWilliams, Chief of the Division of Immigration and Housing of the State of California, is one of the nation's leading authorities on the problems of agricultural labor. His book, *Factories in the Field,* admirably documented the situation with which John Steinbeck dealt dramatically in *The Grapes of Wrath.* More recently, Mr. McWilliams has continued his study of the changes which are overtaking American agriculture. The result is a second book, *Shadows on the Land,* which will be published this winter. "Farms into Factories," which we present in this issue, is a chapter from that book. Mr. McWilliams has also contributed extensively to various periodicals, among them *The Nation, The New Republic,* and *Common Sense.*

Bishop Francis J. McConnell is one of the most distinguished of liberal churchmen. President of DePauw University from 1909 to 1912, he was elected in the latter year to the episcopacy of the Methodist Church and is now the resident bishop of the New York area. He has been president of the Federal Council of Churches of America and of the American Association for Social Security. In addition to numerous books on theology and the philosophy of religion, Bishop McConnell has written a biography of John Wesley which is almost a complete social history of England in the eighteenth century. The special bent of his religious and social interests is indicated by the titles of two books of his authorship: *The Christian Ideal and Social Control* and *Christianity and Coercion.*

The problem of avoiding inflation in a war situation is one which faces the United States, no less than the other warring powers. The manner in which England has approached the problem is thus of more than academic interest to Americans. Ernest Dale, who deals with that subject in this issue, is a young English economist, recently come to this country. A graduate of Cambridge University, he has been also in touch for several years with Mr. Kalecki and his circle at the Oxford Institute of Statistics.

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

Yellow Springs, Ohio

(*Continued from page* 524)

The question of the relationship of literature to politics is one not easily resolved; and whether the results of the Marxist impact on American writing in the '30's were salutary is a matter for debate. There can be no debate, however, over the fact of the decline in Marxist influence after the signing of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG, whose article on the subject appears in this issue, has written frequently of the impact of society on literature in such journals as *The Sewanee Review, The South Atlantic Quarterly,* and the *Modern Monthly*. Mr. Glicksberg is also the author of a book, *Walt Whitman and the Civil War*.

Though FREEMAN CHAMPNEY has spent several years "on the irreverent periphery of the academic world," and is an editor of *The Writer's Forum* as well as of *The Antioch Review,* he claims that he is primarily a printer. As manager of the Antioch Press, he designed the typography and format of *The Antioch Review,* and he does a good share of the shopwork on each issue.

The problem of the "permanent minorities" is one with which ALBERT VITON is unusually well equipped to deal. As a former Near-Eastern correspondent of *The Nation,* he is intimately acquainted with that part of the world and with the situation in the Balkans. He has, moreover, devoted many years to the study of colonial policy, one of the fruits of that study being his book, *Great Britain: an Empire in Transition*. Although we are impressed with the lucidity of his statement of the problem, we disagree strongly with his proposed solution. On this and similar points, we should like to hear what our readers think.

FREDERICK BURKHARDT, formerly Kellett Fellow at Oriel College, Oxford, is now instructor in Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin. He has published a translation of J. G. Herder's *God, Some Conversations* and a number of book reviews.

HERMAN SCHNURER needs no introduction to readers of *The Antioch Review*. He has contributed articles in earlier issues on "The Intellectual Sources of French Fascism" and the social implications of the comic strip.

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partisan review

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- a biographical study of Proust, with much new material. By Robert VIGNERON.

LONDON LETTER

- the story of the Home Guard. By George ORWELL.

VENUSBERG TO NUREMBERG

- a discussion of Peter Viereck's "Metapolitics." By Clement GREENBERG.

In the January-February issue—

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- the case for leftwing support of the war. By Sidney HOOK.

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LOUIS DOLIVET, Secretary-General of the International Free World Association and one of the editors of the new anti-fascist monthly, *Free World,* is a young Frenchman who has long been active in various international movements. Before coming to this country, after the fall of France, he was Secretary-General of the International Peace Campaign. In that capacity, he was in touch with progressive forces in most of the countries of Europe and can, therefore, speak with considerable authority of the factors which led to the collapse of those forces and of the popular aspirations which must be satisfied in any postwar settlement. M. Dolivet fought with the French Air Force during the war with Germany and was wounded in action. He has contributed articles to the *Journal des Nations, Monde, The Nation,* and various Scandinavian magazines.

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